

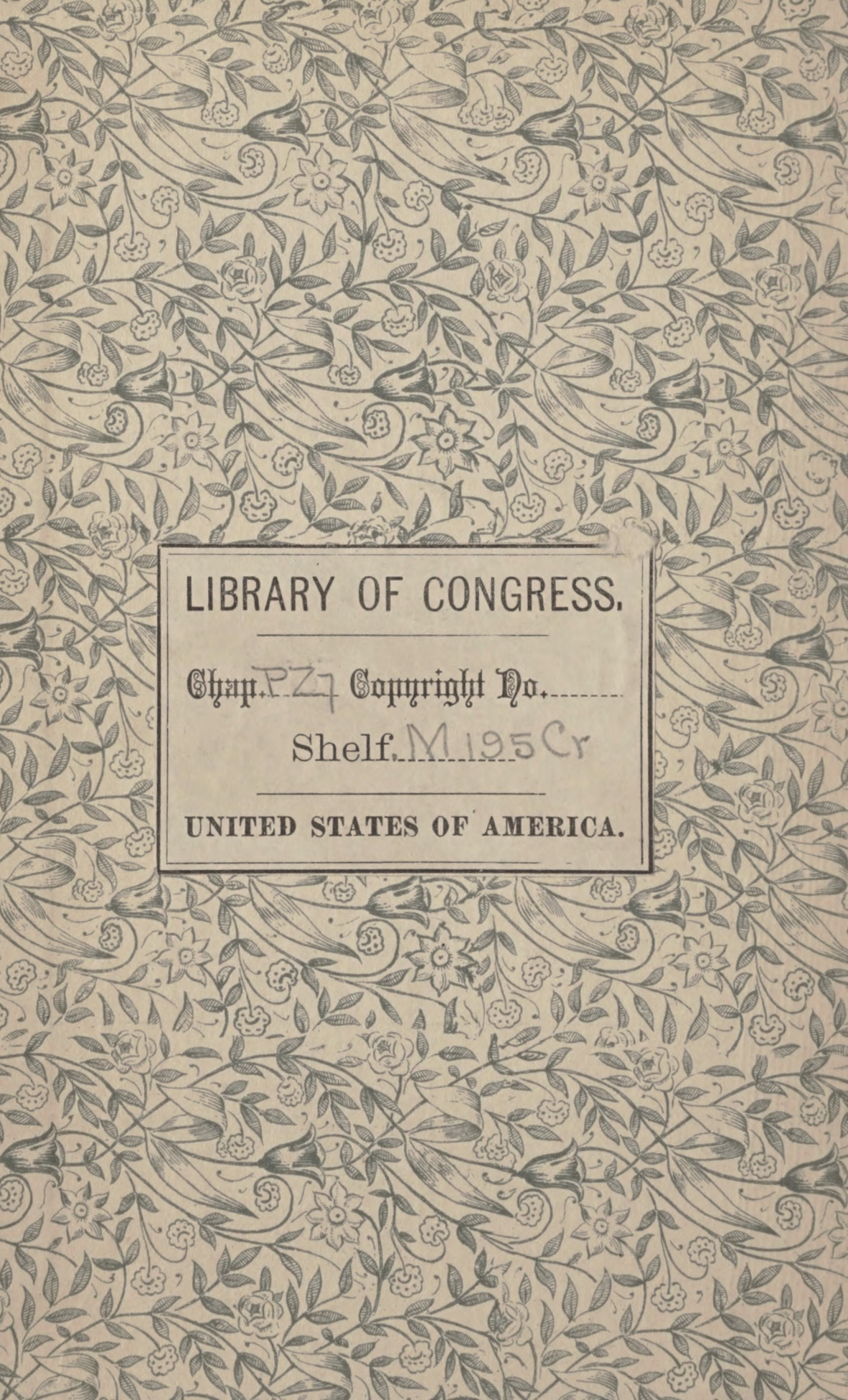


CROWN JEWELS



MRS. H. B. McKEEVER.





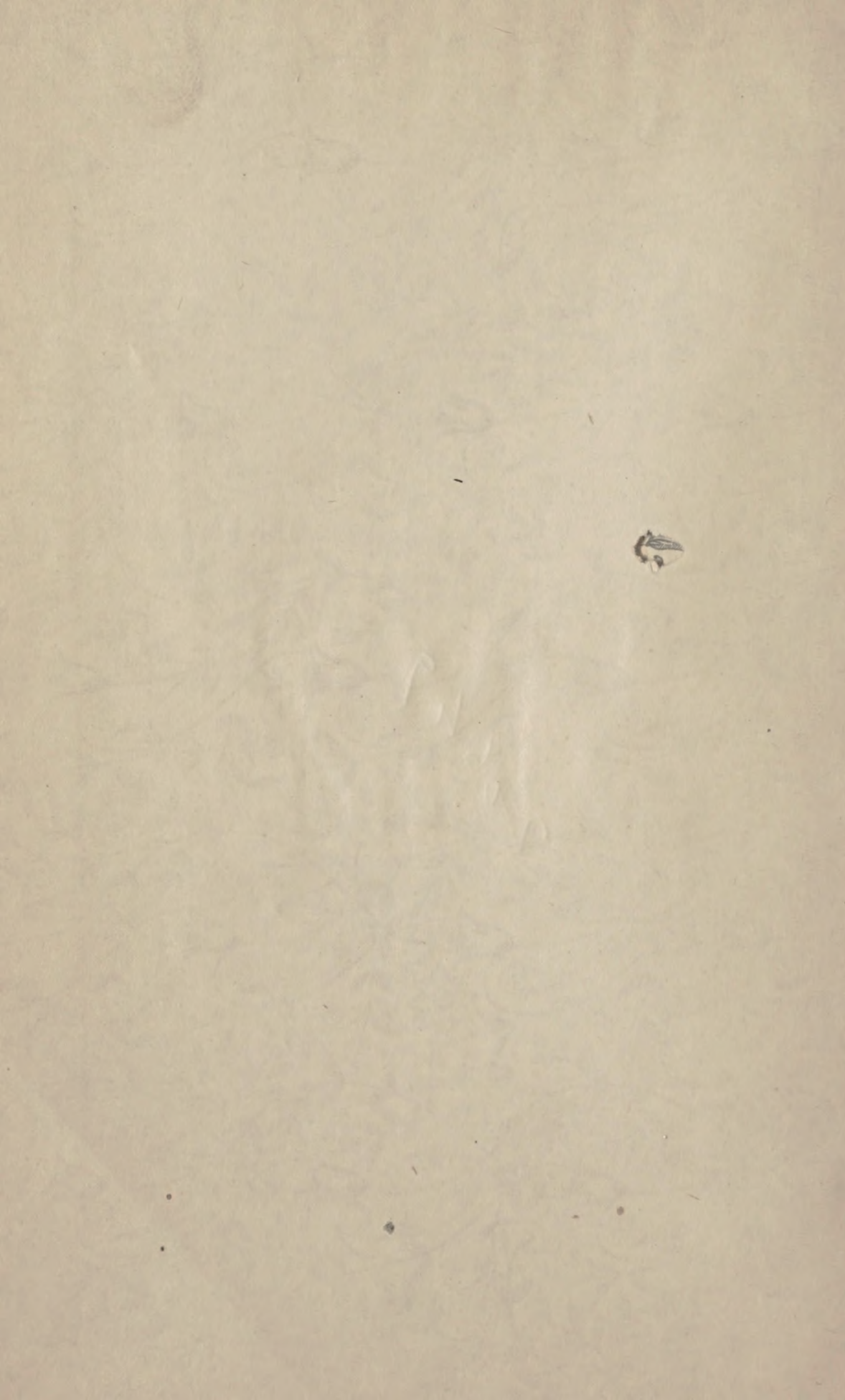
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A MOTHER'S CROWN JEWELS.

CROWN JEWELS.

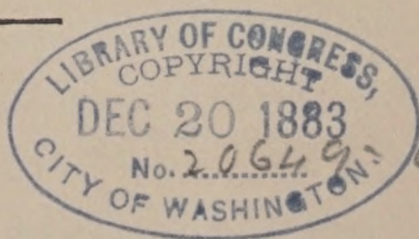
BY

✓
HARRIET B. McKEEVER,

AUTHOR OF

"EDITH'S MINISTRY," "THE OLD CHATEAU," "HEAVEN-
WARD--EARTHWARD," "TWICE CROWNED,"
"SILVER THREADS," "WOOD-
CLIFF," Etc.

35



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PREFACE.

WVER thirty years ago a serial tale was published in England and reprinted in this country, entitled "The Story of a Family." The subject, as well as the style in which it was written, was attractive, and it had a large host of readers. Not in the same manner, nor to answer the same purpose, is this story written. That had no decidedly religious character; the inmates of the household had no specially religious training, and the sketch was rather that of society life than of domestic discipline and results. The aim of this story is to trace the history of a family from infancy to mature life; developing the processes of training and growth both in the intellectual and the spiritual life, and exemplifying the Scriptural truth that as one sows so shall he also reap.

The "crown jewels" of a mother's life are her children. The polishing and setting of these jewels are her chief concern. Let her beware how she uses them: for they may be brilliants in her crown if handled rightly; if not, only common pebbles. And let children beware how they submit to the polishing process. Only by God's grace can they become indeed "crown jewels;" and while the educational life of the family and the school may seem to be a severe discipline, it is only by such method that the diamonds in the rough of a child's nature can be transformed into sparkling and beautiful jewels which the Master will not disdain to use when he comes to make them up.

To parents and children this book is presented, in the hope that both will find it a help, in the life that now is, for the life that is to come.

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CROWN JEWELS.

Chapter I.

ONLY A SPARK.

“**N**LY a soft mass of pink and white flesh.” So they say; but they don’t know what a well-spring of joy bubbles up every hour from my baby, my Harold.

It is true that he only feeds and sleeps; but he’s just as happy as a little animal can possibly be, and I am waiting for the first dawn of the immortal in my child.

Just to know that he is mine is bliss indeed, and I pray every day for my darling, pray that with the dawn of intellect may come the breath of the Holy Spirit.

He does not look like any one yet—such dark, brown, wandering eyes; such a pursed-up little mouth; his skin as soft as velvet—and he’s mine—all mine.

It was a bright, beautiful day yesterday, and the sunlight streamed in through the cracks of the shut-

ters, playing in flickering beams on the bright wallpaper.

I saw the sweet eyes following the rays, but I did not disturb the waking thought. Then he smiled, as if he thought it pretty, and I hailed the gleam. It is true that it was only a spark, but just the first glance of an immortal soul in a world of beauty.

Next day he watched the same dancing rays; and then I saw him smile at bright colors, and I brought out my colored balls, and blessed Frederic Froebel when I saw my baby following the gentle motions of the pretty plaything.

I remembered Froebel's hints about gentleness, and soft, sweet music; for he says that it is a great mistake to toss a young infant about in a boisterous way, and we two enjoyed the plays of the great educator.

To be sure, it was only a spark of immortality that beamed in his dark, brown eye.

But yesterday he followed me about with his sweet eyes, and I know that there was love in the glance; now he coos so tenderly when he sees mamma, stretches out his little arms, and nestles down so lovingly in my fond embrace.

Every day there is some new glimpse of the immortal; and now the darling is beginning to play with mamma, hails her coming—crying when she leaves him, crows in his innocent delight, and makes the nursery just the happiest place on earth for a mother.

Now, too, he begins to enjoy sweet sounds, and I sing the soft lullabies or the little rhymes of Mother Goose, and it seems so wonderful that the writer could have imagined the odd little figures and the funny jingles that float in the little brain of a young infant.

But it is not all bliss, by any means, in the life of the little one; for the pains of humanity torture the tender frame, and call for all the patient mother-love that never fails.

What a blessed fountain of comfort to the little sufferer is that pure, unselfish love!

I look at my darling when he sleeps so peacefully, see the smiles flitting over the sweet face, and wonder what he sees in his dreams.

Do angels, indeed, whisper to these young immortals? for we are told that "in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

If the little ones there spoken of refer to real Christians, who are like the little ones in character, may it not also refer to these precious lambs?

When I see him sleeping so quietly, I pray that our Father may take him into his gracious keeping, and that he may live to be a shining light in the Church of the Redeemer.

How can a mother live without prayer?

It seems as if every throb of love must be carried on the wings of prayer to heaven.

When I wash my babe, my heart calls out,

“Cleanse thou my child in the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness.” When I dress him, I say, “Clothe him with thy righteousness.” When I lay him in his bed at night, I pray, “Defend my darling from all harm, and draw him early to thyself.”

Chapter II.

PSYCHE.

VERY day I see marks of growth in my darling, stepping on in the life that knows no ending, taking his first trembling steps so fearful, and yet so trusting, in the hand held out to stay his infant efforts.

Now he is beginning to prattle, and papa and I think that there never was a sweeter child in any nest before, his young heart so full of love—such a darling little rogue; for Harold is beginning to play mischievous pranks, but we think it just a little funny, that is all.

But he is wonderfully practical sometimes.

The other day his cousin brought a drum here, and the child was delighted—he wanted one, of course; but we told him that he must wait until he was a little older.

The nurse left him in the dining-room a few minutes, and, climbing upon a chair, he managed to mount the table, and seated himself in the center—a happy little king, to be sure.

A great noise attracted nurse to the room, and there she found her pet seated in the middle of the table, with a large china bowl turned upside down,

and playing away on it with the handles of knife and fork, scattering the pieces in all directions.

"Dis is my drum, nursie," he said; "just hear what a big noise I make!" belaboring the bowl until the fragments lay around.

She could scarcely keep from laughing, but said, gravely:

"What will mamma say, Harold?"

"She'll say it's a pity that I had n't a drum, just like Cousin Jack."

He is brimful of questions, too, and takes various ways of enlarging his field of knowledge; indeed, his enterprising spirit is somewhat alarming.

The boy has a pet kitten, and, very fond of the bath himself, he carried off poor little Snowball to the tub; and missing the little rogue, we were pretty sure that he was after some mischief.

Tracing him to the bath-room, we were just in time to save Snowball's life; for, holding her under the water, in her struggles to free herself she had scratched the boy's hands, and he said:

"See, mamma, what a bad kitty she is!"

Then I told him that it hurt Snowball, and he he would have been very sorry if the kitten had been drowned.

We released the poor little thing; but he insisted that she should be punished for scratching his hands, and he tried to fasten her in his corner of discipline.

He keeps us busy following his footsteps, for every day brings some new trick.

The other day I saw him watching papa when he was shaving, calling out:

“What you do dat for, papa?”

When papa told him that he was shaving off his beard, he rubbed his dimpled hands across his chin, saying, so comically:

“Harold dot no beard, papa.”

But next day papa left him just one minute in the room after he had done shaving, and we heard some loud cries that called us hastily to the room.

There was the little fellow, down on the floor, his face covered with lather, rubbing the soapy water in his eyes.

“Bad soap, mamma,” he said; “it hurts Harold’s eyes.”

I do n’t think he will meddle with the lather again.

The other night we were sitting by the window while I was undressing him, and the bright moonlight streamed in upon his little white feet.

I saw him looking up at the bright orb, delight sparkling in every feature, as he said:

“P’itty moon! p’itty moon! Mamma, Harold wants de p’itty moon.”

“Too big, my darling, and too far off,” I answered.

I have not yet spoken to my child the name of the Great Creator. I have seen so much irreverence in the common modes of talking to children about God and “the good man,” that I fear the power of first impressions, and am watching for the time when I may approach the subject.

It is so hard for the young immortal, surrounded as he is by material objects, to conceive of the idea of spirit.

I talk to him about good and bad, right and wrong; but it is his parents' will that is yet his moral law.

By and by I will tell him about the dear Heavenly Father. Let me never forget that the first book read and the last laid aside by any child is the *conduct* of his mother.

What a little tyrant my boy is! We may well call him King Baby, for from the hour of his birth he has been the household monarch. Here I copy a few beautiful lines that describe just what he is:

KING BABY.

“His scepter is a rattle,
His throne is mother's arms;
He reigns a tiny tyrant,
In all his dimpled charms.
Yet round his royal presence
Our loving hearts entwine:
Dictator of the cradle,
And king by right divine!

Whatever be his mandates,
No courtiers dare rebel;
He's mother's chief of household,
Prime minister as well.
In yon perambulator,
His downy car of state,
Exacting, rosy monarch,
What triumphs on him wait!

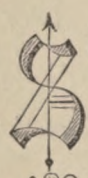
In purple ease and splendor,
Long, long he seeks to reign;

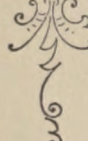
All hints of nose disjointed
He smiles at with disdain.
Alas, that royal greatness
Should ever be disowned !
Here comes a tiny stranger—
King Baby is dethroned."

I think of the last line of the poem about King Baby; but I am very sure that our precious boy will not be dethroned, for our hearts are large enough and warm enough to welcome and cherish with fondest love both our darlings.

Chapter III.

ANOTHER BIRD IN MY NEST.

OME months have passed since I made my last entries in my diary, but now I take up my pen again.

Harold is so happy, for there is a little sister in the nursery for him to love, and we have never allowed any one to say a word about a nose out of joint. We have taught him that baby is the sweetest gift that the Heavenly Father could have sent to us, and his loving heart has taken the darling in.

But he asks, "Why does n't she play with Harold, mamma?"

Then I tell him that baby is too little, but by and by he shall teach her how to walk and how to play, and then they'll have jolly times together.

But we caught him the other day putting his fingers in her eyes. I wonder why all children do so. I suppose it's a feeling of curiosity to see if baby's eyes are like his own.

He is seeing beauty everywhere, and the other day he brought me a lovely rose, saying:

"Smell it, mamma dear, so sweet, so p'itty." And, bending his dark eyes upon it, he said:

"Who made de p'itty rose, mamma?"

I thought perhaps the time had come for me to teach my first lesson about God.

Then I brought out a piece of worsted-work, on which I had embroidered a ghost of a rose.

Holding it up before him, I asked:

"Who made that, Harold?"

"My mamma made that," he said, touching it with his fingers, and then touching the sweet, soft rose-leaves.

Holding the two side by side, I questioned him as I touched the worsted-work:

"Pretty rose, Harold?"

The expressive face turned away, saying:

"No, no, mamma, dis is a p'itty rose," every feature expressing pleasure as he asked slowly:

"Who made dis p'itty rose, mamma?"

"I'll tell you, Harold, if you'll try to listen. All the little boys and girls have a father and a mother, and all the people in the world have one Heavenly Father, the Father of all the men and women and all the little children."

"O, my," he said, "what a big family he must have?"

"Yes," I said, "we can't tell how many, and yet he takes care of them all; it is the Heavenly Father that has made all the trees and flowers, the sun, and the moon, and all the stars, all the cattle, and the birds, and all the living creatures. He made that lovely rose. Mamma could never make a rose like that."

“Where is the Heavenly Father?” he asked.

“His home is up there,” I said, pointing to the sky, “and yet he sees us all every day and every hour. He loves good children, Harold, and has given you a father and mother to teach you what is right. He has given them a Holy Book that they may know his will. He likes us to pray to him, and now, my dear child, kneel down, and I will teach you what to say when you pray to him.”

Then he repeated after me:

“Dear Heavenly Father, show me how to be a good little boy, teach me how to do what is right, teach me how to mind my papa and mamma, and to be good and kind to every body. Hear my little prayer, for Jesus’ sake, amen.”

When he arose he asked:

“Does he love me, mamma? did he hear my prayer?”

“Yes, my child; now don’t forget your Heavenly Father. His name is God, but I would rather have you call him your Heavenly Father, for fear that you might speak his name without thinking how great and good he is.”

“Why did you say for Jesus’ sake, mamma?” he asked.

I replied, “The first man that God made was very good, but he did not always keep good, and the Heavenly Father was angry with him, and had to send his own dear Son into the world to bring the people back to the Heavenly Father by dying on the cross for

them, and so, when we pray to God, we always say for Jesus' sake, because our Heavenly Father hears us, not for our own, but for the dear Son's sake."

This was my first lesson about the Heavenly Father, but it had stirred up a train of thought that brought the little fellow to me daily with his questions about the Heavenly Father.

Truly did I see in these artless expressions the wings of that ever active, living soul that is marching on forever and ever. O, may I have grace to train it for the skies!

I have heard it said that we must not give children any positive religious teaching, and that we must not put into their minds what we have received as truth, but leave them to gather for themselves the convictions that will come in riper years.

But that seems to me very much like saying that we ought not to feed our children in their earliest years, because by and by they will have to earn their own living and feed themselves.

That can not be true, for I feed my children that I may bring them on and make them ready to feed themselves. And so I teach my children simple religious truth, using their loving trust in authority, that when old enough they may search for themselves and be convinced of what is true.

So the Christian Church teaches the child a faith that has the warrant of all ages, full of devotion and love. She calls on him to believe doctrines of which he can not be convinced as yet, teaching the child

with the voice of authority, the nature with the voice of reason.

I have a Sun in my system of religious truth—the Blessed Lord, “the light of the world,” the light of childhood, and so I will make my children familiar with his life of love and holiness; I will fill their minds with his heavenly teachings, for I remember that he has said, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” And will it not be so with the docile, loving nature of childhood when they hear how our dear Lord laid his hands in blessing on the representatives of all their race?

So on our Christmas-days we will bring our dear Lord, in his holy childhood, very near to our darlings; our Good Fridays will bring the unspeakable love of our dear Lord in his death of agony; our Easter-days the resurrection joy, when he walked once more with his disciples before his ascension; our Sundays the Lord’s own days, when we will try to bring him very near as our familiar guest. Cut with the pen of a diamond, and burned in with the fire of the Spirit, these heavenly lessons will sink deep into the young hearts entrusted to a believing mother’s care, for if it is his truth I am sure that it will never be effaced, but will shine in the lives so dear to us.

Chapter IV.

MY NURSERY.

THERE I am, surrounded by six children, all so different, and I find my hands and my heart full of work and anxious thought.

I had a visit yesterday from Mrs. Tyson, the mother of four sweet children. It seemed so strange to hear her rattle on about children's fashions, and never a word about the task of training these immortals; for every day I feel more and more my own insufficiency, my many shortcomings. But failures teach useful lessons, and I often have such to study. I like to see my children well dressed, too; but my great desire is to see them good and holy, and our talk in the nursery is much more about such things than about childish finery.

I find Myra Spencer a valuable assistant; for she understands child nature so well. She does not expect children to be like grown-up people, and I am so glad, for I do most heartily dislike this unnatural growth in the gushing years of sportive childhood.

Sometimes I step into the school-room and take my seat among them, and always feel welcome; for I never interfere with Miss Spencer in the presence of

the children. If I have suggestions to make it is when we are alone; and she is so ready to listen, for there is not a bit of self-conceit about Myra Spencer, and our intercourse is that of two warm friends equally interested in the same holy work.

The children think that their governess is almost infallible; and sometimes I am much amused to find them innocently setting up her opinions, even in opposition to mamma's, saying, "Miss Spencer says so; and she is a teacher, and ought to know."

She is such a bright, cheerful instructress, and makes study a delight to her pupils; but it is real work in the school-room, and she never tolerates slovenly recitations or exercises among them, and they know it. But when the lessons are ended, she closes her book, and says, "On with your hats, children; for we are bound for the woods to-day."

She has the five eldest under her care—Harold, Mary, Wilbur, Allan, and Madge. Little Flo steps in now and then, but, rather too frisky for the school-room, she is sent off to the nursery; but she always joins the excursions out of doors, and they return with glowing cheeks and sparkling eyes, telling me what a lovely walk they have had with dear Miss Spencer—little Flo very proud when she brings mamma a lovely bouquet of wild flowers.

Sometimes they stop on their way home to inquire about little Johnny Haule, who is confined to his bed with spine disease; or step in at old Auntie Weston's, generally leaving some little gift of love; for Miss

Spencer is careful to cultivate the moral as well as the intellectual side of her pupils.

We have lunch at twelve o'clock; for husband does not come home until six, when we have supper.

Edward is such an affectionate father, and it is so sweet to see how the children love him. The whole company watch for him, and even little Flora toddles off at the end of the procession to meet papa, always sure to be caught up in his dear arms—a proud and happy little queen, to be sure.

After supper, papa gathers the flock around him, and they have a merry time, playing games with dear Edward; and I think of Longfellow's sweet poem when I see him thus besieged:

“They climb up into my turret
O'er the arms and back of my chair;
If I try to escape, they surround me;
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,
Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the bishop of Bingen
In his mouse-tower on the Rhine!

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old mustache as I am
Is not a match for you all?

I have you fast in my fortress,
And will not let you depart,
But put you down into the dungeon
In the round-tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you forever—
Yes, forever and a day—
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin
And molder in dust away.”

Our family worship is so delightful; for Miss Spencer is a finished performer, and we have charming music, in which the children join with their sweet young voices. Then Edward knows just how to make the service edifying to young people—never long and prosy, but short, fervent, and practical. I know that it is a blessed means of grace to the dear children, and they will never forget the earnest prayers that ascend morning and evening from the family altar.

Harold is thirteen—a handsome, intelligent boy, with a strong, imperious will, but a warm, loving heart.

Mary, my second, we call our morning glory; for she is always the same happy child, spreading sunshine everywhere, very proud of Harold, who lords it over his gentle sister with a kingly sway.

Wilbur, our third, is a very thoughtful boy, fond of study, with an eye for the beautiful, but very sensitive.

Madge is a merry sprite, her ringing laugh filling the house with glee; we sometimes call her Madge Wildfire. She has a jolly comrade in Brother Allan, a warm-hearted, frolicsome boy, but disposed to be idle, his unsteady character often making me anxious.

Flora, our youngest, is the sweet pet of the household.

It is the one desire of my heart that in the days

of their youth they may become the dear children of God.

It was in early girlhood that I gave myself to the Lord, and in giving my children to him I am only giving him his own, for not to do it would be robbing God.

I remember that the knowledge and fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and so I humbly sow the seed, looking to the Lord for his blessing, praying with them often and heartily.

But I see the germs of an evil nature among them; and yesterday I was so grieved to see Harold exercising his power over his gentle sister.

They are taking lessons in riding, and yesterday it was Mary's turn; but Harold had set his heart upon going, and I overheard their talk on the piazza.

"I think you might let me go, Harold," she said; "for you rode yesterday, and twice last week, and I have only rode once."

"I am the oldest, Mary," he replied, "and ought to have the first choice; and you're only a girl, and can go just as well after supper."

Then I stepped out, and told Harold that "I had overheard their talk, and was so much ashamed of my son."

"He always makes me give up, mamma," she said, with her eyes full of tears.

"She's such a cry-baby, mamma," he replied. "I don't see why she can't ride after supper, just as well."

"I suppose that she could," I answered; "but it

grieves me to see how you forget that Mary is your sister, and, as a little lady, is entitled to courtesy at the hands of her brother."

"He can go, mamma," she said, with her usual sweetness, "for I do n't like to make a disturbance."

"I would rather that you should go, Mary," I said, "for Harold must not be encouraged in his attempts at ruling."

"But, mamma," she replied, so sweetly, "it would n't give me any pleasure to make Harold unhappy, and now, really, I would rather go after supper."

"You are a dear, sweet girl," he said, kissing her affectionately, "and I know that I ought to be ashamed of myself."

And so they settled it between them; but Harold took a short ride, and, returning very soon, he saw Mary seated on the pony, saying, as he gave her the reins:

"I would rather have you take your ride now, sister."

"Thank you, Harold dear," she said, as she touched the pony with her whip, and was soon off on a gentle canter.

"That was right, my son," I said, laying my hand upon the boy's head; and the bright eyes returned the glance of love, as he replied:

"I'll try to do better, mamma; but I do love to be master."

"Think of the Great Master who made himself a servant, Harold."

“But I’m so far away from him, mamma,” was the low reply.

I look around at the dear group of immortals in my nursery, and see six crown jewels to polish for the Savior’s diadem. May they all be found when he gathers up the precious blood-bought gems, not one missing on that solemn day!

Chapter V.

SPRING BLOSSOMS.

URELY it was meant that God's little children should be brought up among his works. We thought so when we chose a home in the country for the early years of our darlings.

The crowded streets and human bustle of a great city seem so unwholesome to the opening nature of sweet childhood; but here at Shadyside every object speaks of the power and goodness of the Father of us all.

It is the early spring-time, when the world is full of music, the fragrance of sweet flowers perfuming the air.

Instead of the Babel street cries, our children awake every day among the songs of birds, and when they look around them in our happy home they are quite surrounded by pictures of beauty.

The entrance to our house is through a grove of grand old trees, under which are scattered many seats for the weary. Just in front of the house are lovely flower-beds, and just now the early Spring flowers are putting on their delicate robes. If we look out of our back windows we have a view of rolling hills, the landscape dotted over with neat farm houses, a silvery

stream winding its gentle course through the lovely picture.

Cattle are seen browsing in the fields, and all the sights and sounds speak a soft language of quiet beauty. Here we are in the midst of the works of God, where every thing is calculated to draw the heart heavenward. Harold has the eye of an artist, and points out the beauties of the landscape, the fleecy clouds, the green fields, the rolling hills, 'all have their charms for our gifted boy, but we are often amused when Madge says: "You must have sharp eyes, Harold, for I don't see such beautiful pictures."

We see the enlivening influence of nature's smiles in the rosy cheeks, bright eyes, strong frames, and cheerful spirits of our dear children, and every day Miss Spencer is careful to take them among these lovely scenes. Sometimes to the woods, where in the early springtime they search for the trailing arbutus under the soft moss, sometimes to the shady valleys, where they gather the early violets, or along the banks of the creek, where they sit under the shade of green trees, watching the rippling of the little waves stirred by the breath of the Spring breezes.

There is a swing formed by a grape-vine, on the branches of a spreading tree, and the children enjoy the sport on the slender vine, never thinking of danger.

The other day Madge was in her wild mood, and, though frequently warned, persisted in violent motions of the slender bough. Suddenly there was a crack,

then a crash, and Madge was plunged into the stream, but Harold was after her in a moment and soon brought out the child, thoroughly drenched.

She was more mortified than hurt, for she knew that it was her own fault; but Mary brought her up kindly to the house and changed her clothes, just whispering a few gentle words of reproof.

I had to give another private lecture about her carelessness, and I often wonder if Madge will ever learn to be obedient.

The other day they started with their baskets in search of wild flowers, and returned with some of the sweetest, for I think the pale loveliness of the Spring flowers is so very charming.

They are fond of excursions on the water, and we have a boat moored to the bank of the creek, and our boys are quite skillful in rowing the little bark along the silver stream, but Miss Spencer always accompanies them, for we can not trust the wild adventures of let-loose children.

Mary and Harold have charge of a flower-bed, and it is so pleasant to watch them looking for the sprouting of the younger seeds which their hands have planted.

When the first buds appear, and then the blossoms, their young hearts overflow with joy, and I hear Mary talking to the children about the good God who spreads such lovely flowers for his children.

Out in the fruit-orchard, too, we trace their young footsteps, where the air is fragrant with the sweet

blossoms, for Edward has pears and apples in great variety, and we look forward to a fine crop. Their innocent love for all God's creatures is developed here, for I have tried to teach them from earliest days not to harm even an insect in its proper home.

They are wonderfully interested in the bee-hive, and Miss Spencer has taught them many a sweet lesson from these busy little creatures in their miniature world, where monarch and subject dwell together so harmoniously.

I like to see them so good to the cows, for they are well acquainted with the brown-eyed creatures. We have only two, but they will both race after our children to get their handful of salt. I have seen such cruelty in children toward the brute creation that I have taken great pains to teach them better lessons, and I know that neither of them would harm Brindle or Whiteface for the world. The horses, too, know our children, and the pony has many a game of merry romps with the boys, playing with them just like a dog.

The girls are great friends to the poultry, and have named all the roosters and hens according to their characters. So we have the General, the Major, Spunk, and Little Strut among the roosters; Nelly, Speckle, Flirt, and Frisk among the hens.

After breakfast, off to the barn-yard. Mary and Madge call their pets around them, and after feeding the domestic fowls scamper off to the green trees, where they gather their feathered friends, and it is a

pretty sight to watch the sweet song-birds hopping after the girls, lighting on their fingers sometimes, for they are very tame little creatures, under the ministry of childish love.

Once I asked Signor Blitz how he tamed his canaries, wondering if he ever disciplined them. Smiling in his own peculiar way, he replied, "O yes, ma'am, we use a little straw with the refractory, but our mode of training is really through the appetite, giving them something nice when they learn a new trick."

Who can calculate the influence of such surroundings upon the character of our children, and it is among such lovely pictures that they are trained.

Miss Spencer is well fitted to lead their young hearts from nature up to nature's God, and when they bring in their lovely flowers she is never at a loss, but in her own bright way teaches them to trace their families, to class them, and to admire the wisdom and goodness that takes such care of the flowers, season after season spreading the sweet bloom even over a world desolated by sin. I heard her the other day telling them that the death of Jesus holds back the vials of deserved wrath, so that, although men are so wicked, the smiles of God are seen yet in the lovely flowers for Jesus' sake.

The Winter spreads its gloomy pall over the earth, when all the plants seem dead, but with the breath of the smiling Spring we see the pure snow-drop piercing the frozen earth, hear the singing of the streams so long confined, see the clouds flying in lovely groups

over the landscape, and soon the early song birds tell us that nature is awake once more.

I love to listen to Miss Spencer when she points out so eloquently the types of resurrection by which we are surrounded, when every Spring, with its heavenly voices, proclaims the truth that, though man dies, he will rise again, and if a soul redeemed by the blood of Jesus will shine forth in the glory of a new creation.

The other day I saw her bring out a little paper of dry seeds, which looked so withered.

“But they are not dead,” she said; “there is a germ of life in them, though they look so dry; for a few weeks ago I planted just such seeds, and now look here, I have plucked up some of the little seeds. You see that the seed has rotted, and out of its decay there are some shoots piercing the earth downward, and these are roots; some sprouting upward are the shoots of the young plant. And so it is with those human frames of ours—we plant the remains of those we love in the ground, but by and by the germ of immortal life will burst the tomb, and the new creature will come forth in a glorified form, more beautiful than these lovely flowers, to die no more.”

And so my Spring blossoms are nurtured among the beautiful leaves of nature's book, away from the din and bustle of city life, where they never see a sensational paper, read an improper book, or mingle with the promiscuous crowd of the great metropolis. May the Holy Spirit breathe upon my Spring blos-

soms, that they may thus become plants of righteousness, spared to labor for the dear Lord who died for their redemption. I watch and pray daily for that breath from heaven which alone can regenerate the soul.

Chapter VI.

WEEDS IN MY GARDEN.

T is in children's plays that we see so much of their real character; and I often sit, quietly looking on, gathering much help in my domestic training. Harold is always king; Mary, yielding and unselfish; Wilbur, her champion; Madge, a harum-scarum child, with a fiery temper and a warm heart; and Allan, just a lazy, self-indulgent boy.

It was a rainy day, and the children were confined to the house after school-hours. They brought out their games, and for an hour amused themselves with intellectual pleasures. - Harold is not fond of historical games, for Wilbur is always ahead of him, and he can never bear to be second; but in games of strength he excels, and so they have a good romping play, Harold always victorious.

I sat at the window very quiet, with my sewing, watching the group, and at last Harold was so whimsical that, tired of all the plays, he threw down his ball, and, seizing the best chair, planted himself with his book near the window, and, with his feet stretched out upon another chair, looked comfortable.

Mary and Madge paired off with their dolls in a

quiet corner, and Allan took a seat near enough to tease his sisters, while Wilbur, with pencil and paper, amused himself with sketching.

Harold is a bright, handsome boy, and I look at his flashing eye and firm lip, and, watching his movements, I see in all the imperious will that proclaims him king everywhere. If all this strength can only be directed in the way of right and holy living, softened by the sweet charities of the Gospel of love, what a noble man he will make! And yet, when little Flo fell off the chair and hurt herself, Harold was the first to kiss our pet and make her well. But why does he lord it over Mary? I suppose it is the consciousness of power; but we are all proud of our brilliant Harold.

Wilbur is a promising boy, but so devoted to his studies that he can't bear interruption from any source, and I am sorry to see him often very irritable when any one interferes with his papers. Madge is his particular pest; for she loves to tease Wilbur, hiding his drawings, mislaying his books, and annoying him by her tricks.

I went out of the room for a few minutes, and when I returned the nursery was in a blaze.

I asked what was the matter; for Wilbur was tossing the papers about in his desk, and Madge sat crying with passion.

"She is always meddling, mamma," he said; "and yesterday I put my drawing in my portfolio, and now it is gone."

"I thought I put it back again, mamma," she

sobbed. "I am almost sure I did; but Wilbur is so unkind—he calls me dreadful names, mamma, and I do n't love him."

Dear Mary stepped forward, with her peace-making words.

"Madge did n't mean to lose your drawing, Wilbur; just forgive her, this once."

In the confusion I thought perhaps the drawing had been overlooked, and, quietly turning over the boy's papers, I found it all safe under a pile of books.

"Now, Wilbur, I hope you are ready to ask your sister's pardon," I said.

"But she did meddle with it, mamma, or else it would have been in the portfolio. But I'm sorry for the names that I called her."

Our darling Flo had her own sweet words, too; and, taking Madge by the hand, she led her to her brother, and, placing her hand in Wilbur's palm, she said:

"Just forgive her this time, Brother Will."

And when he kissed poor Madge, little Flo wiped her sister's eyes, saying, so sweetly:

"There now, darling Madgie, do n't cry any more; now we are all loving children again."

And thus the quarrel was settled by our dear little peacemaker.

After dinner, Flo ran to the window, calling out:

"There's the bright sun, Miss Spencer; now we can take our walk."

Soon equipped, the children were ready for the

walk—all except Allan, who had failed in all his lessons. And even little Flo's intercession was in vain; for Miss Spencer said:

“If we let such neglect pass unpunished, Allan will grow up to be a miserable, lazy man.”

“Shall I stay with him, mamma?” the little girl asked; “he will be so lonesome.”

“I think not, my dear,” I replied; “Allan has been idle and disobedient, and must pay the penalty of wrong-doing.”

But when she came into the room, dressed for the walk, she stole up to Allan, and, throwing her arm about his neck, she kissed him, saying:

“I so sorry, brother dear; but you'll try to be a good boy—and here's a nice peach for you.”

I saw them start off under the care of their faithful teacher, and Flo kissed her hand to Allan, who stood at the window, watching them.

There is one hour sacred to my children; and after family prayer I called Harold to my side, and we had a long, loving talk about his faults, and, bowed before the mercy-seat, we prayed together, and I felt that it was a blessed refuge for a weary heart to bring my precious children to a Savior's feet.

“I know that I have great faults, mamma,” he said; “but it's my nature, and how can I help it?”

“Listen, Harold,” I replied, with my arm around his waist and his cheek upon my shoulder: “‘Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.’”

Harold was serious all the evening, and I observed that he was very tender to his sister Madge, who was still under a cloud.

I think of my children's faults, and in some form or other I see self-will at the root of all: in Harold, the love of ruling; in Wilbur, conscious superiority; in Madge, thoughtless levity; in Allan, willful self-indulgence. But in the sweet traits of our Mary we see that lowly self-denial which leads me to hope that she is in that blessed school where she is learning from the Master the blessedness of that grace which "seeketh not her own." Only a Savior's hand can mold these hearts anew, and every day I take them and leave them at his blessed feet.

It is true that I see weeds in my garden, trying to choke the good seed; but I know that only the Good Husbandman can root them out of nature's corrupt soil. O, for the Spirit of my dear Lord! O, for the mind of Christ, that, dwelling in me in all its fullness, I may shed the light of holiness upon my darlings!

Chapter VII.

DOMESTIC SUNSHINE.

 OURS is indeed a happy fireside, where Edward and I walk together in the blessedness of a true Christian union. I have sought so earnestly to bring our children into intimate relationship with the dear Lord. It is not into the ineffable glory of our ascended Lord that I seek to bring them, but into the sweet companionship of a holy humanity, knowing that the one might chill the trembling hearts; but I try to bring the Savior into our family as a daily guest, guiding, blessing, controlling.

It is his blessed words that are daily remembered in our family circle, and I often find dear Mary coming to me with questions about a doubtful course of conduct, saying so meekly :

“What does our dear Lord say, mamma?”

Dear child, she seems to realize that she is as truly his as our child.

Wilbur, too, has the same thoughtful spirit, and little Flo, I am sure, is one of his dear lambs.

I have seen no such marks yet in Harold; but I believe that God hears and answers prayer, and so I carry them all day by day to the Savior's feet.

Edward is such a help, his manly piety and wise government so judicious.

I know, too, that the children all respect and love their father, and I bless God every day for such a Christian head of our happy household.

Every day the younger children come to me after family prayer to recite their verse of a hymn and psalm, and then say their prayers, the older ones reciting passages of Scripture and a hymn; but they have been taught that their own quiet room is the closet into which the Savior calls them. Little Flo says her verse and her sweet prayer; then, with a merry bound, she kisses mamma, and runs off to her sports. But I never neglect my Bible-reading and short prayer with my darlings. On Saturday I spend an hour in the school-room examining the lessons of the week. These are happy days to the children, and who can tell what joy to the mother?

Sundays are our blessed days, when they often step in before we are up, with the bright, happy Sunday look, standing at our bedside singing sweet hymns,

“Put the spade and wheel away,
Do no weary work to-day,”

Being a great favorite. We always sing a hymn at family prayers, Mary sometimes playing very sweetly, for when Miss Spencer is not well it is such a pleasure for her to lead the music. Papa and I are very busy on Sunday, for both of us teach in the Sunday-school, all our children going with us but our little Flo.

After dinner is the children's time with their father,

when the younger ones climb on his knee and say their hymn and psalm, which they had learned for Sunday.

In the afternoon I hear them say their catechism, and the hour after supper is entirely devoted to them, when I talk to them about sweet Sunday pictures or read some interesting book. Thus we occupy the ground of their young hearts with good and wholesome seed, leaving no room for Satan's tares. They are learning how to be useful, too, for last Saturday Mary showed me a shirt that she is making for Harold, and wild little Madge brought some pretty patchwork, but little Flo is too young to do such work.

Thus our darlings are taught that, because God made them, they are his children and bound to serve him; but we long to see them his children in a dearer, holier bond by adoption and grace, serving him because they love him.

Edward is such a wise father, never giving heedless commands, but when he does command he requires obedience. I saw an instance of that yesterday. Harold had been directed to take a basket of vegetables to old Mrs. Hart, a poor woman who lives not far from Shadyside, and when papa returned he found that Harold had forgotten it.

"I am very sorry," said papa, "for since you have been so negligent I shall have to leave you at home when we take our ride after tea."

"I am sorry too, papa," Harold replied, but he did not ask to be excused, for he knew that papa was

very careful to keep his word, even though it pained him.

Harold saw the party drive off; but quite sure that he deserved punishment, he settled himself with his book upon the piazza.

"There's no use in fretting, mamma," he said, "for I never knew papa to break his word, and I guess he's right."

When they returned the children did not add to Harold's disappointment by glowing accounts of their ride, but as soon as Mary had disrobed she hurried to Harold's side, and by her pleasant chat soon dispersed the cloud upon his bright face. On the following Sunday we observed a family of strangers in a pew near the door, and as there were several young people ours were anxious to know who they were. They were plainly dressed, but there was that in their deportment which attracted us, and, making inquiries, we found that it was a family who had rented a small farm near Shadyside.

Mr. Bronson had been a merchant, but in days when so many went down he was one of the unfortunates. Making an honorable failure he remembered that his early days were spent upon a farm, and his faithful wife encouraged the idea of taking this small place and coming into market with country produce.

Edward and I lost no time in calling upon our neighbors, found them both intelligent and refined, and the family such as we should choose as companions for our children.

Mrs. Bronson, in her calico dress and white apron, was a sweet picture of a farmer's wife, but it was very plain that they had seen better days.

On our second visit we took Harold and Wilbur with us, and as we passed into the farm-house Harold observed a boy of his own age in very rough attire, carrying a bucket of slops to the pigs, and a girl rather older on the way to the barn-yard to milk the cows.

"Is that your son, Mr. Bronson?" asked Edward.

"Yes, sir; Fred is a good boy, and stoops cheerfully to his work. It is not just what we wish for our boy, for he is an intelligent lad, but our Master knows what is best."

Then the mother spoke:

"We have reason to thank God for having given us such good children, for Fred and Sarah are the very light of our eyes."

When Fred came in among us I saw that Harold was very cool to the boy, but Wilbur behaved like a little gentleman, that he was.

A few words from Mr. Bronson led Edward to see that his neighbor was a man to be honored, and whose acquaintance he meant to cultivate.

On our way home papa turned the conversation into a channel that gave our boys food for thought.

"That's a family worth knowing," said papa.

I saw a question in Harold's eyes as he replied:

"Pretty rough-looking children, papa, I think."

"But I thought that Fred Bronson was a boy to

be honored," said papa, "when I heard how he had been disappointed in his hopes of a finished education."

"He looked like one of the commonest of farm-boys, papa," Harold said.

"Yes, that is true, but when I heard the story of Mr. Bronson's misfortunes and the boy's courage, I must say that I honor him."

Next day we received a visit from Mrs. Carter and her two children in her elegant carriage, with driver and footman in livery.

The lady was dressed in the height of fashion, her son, Jerome, a young exquisite, and her daughter, Adele, a girl of the period. I was sorry to see Harold paying court to this party, who had nothing but wealth, for its attendants and pleasures were the only subjects of conversation during their visit.

Jerome talked about his fast horse and his yacht, and Adele about her pony-carriage, her French waiting-maid, and the latest fashions.

I tried to turn the conversation into something a little sensible, but it was in vain, and I thought how much better the new family at the farm-house appeared to me in their changed fortunes than this purse-proud lady and her foolish children.

"Isn't that a splendid turn-out?" said Harold, as they drove away.

"Yes, my son, very splendid," I replied; "but we heard more sense in the hour that we spent with the Bronsons than we would hear for a whole day with poor Mrs. Carter."

"I suppose it is so, mamma," he replied; "but I do like style, indeed I do."

"Don't forget, my son," I said, "that there is an honor that comes from God; always prefer that, Harold, to the honor that comes from man. It is only courteous to return this visit, but I would much rather that you should make companions of the Bronsons. Goodness and true refinement before wealth—remember that, my son."

Edward soon gathered the Bronson children into the Sunday-school, and when dressed in their best suits it was plainly seen that they belonged to a higher class than rough country children.

On Saturday afternoon we invited Fred and Sarah Bronson to take tea with us. They did not come very early, for they had some tasks to finish first; but when the two entered our parlor in their neat attire, and took their place among us, I knew that they were gentle folks.

No doubt they had been accustomed to elegance in their city home, for there was no vulgar curiosity, but quite at their ease among us, they joined pleasantly in familiar chat.

When Harold took them into the library I saw that Fred was quite at home with some of the best authors, and I am pretty sure that Harold was not a little confused when Fred talked so sensibly, and yet so modestly, about facts of history. I must say that I was pleased to see Harold have to take a back seat in the presence of this bright boy, if he is my son.

They were well acquainted with the etiquette of table-manners, and when papa addressed his conversation to Fred I was so pleased to hear his intelligent remarks, for it seems that he reads the papers and forms his own conclusions.

After tea we had some games on the lawn, in which papa and I joined.

"This is really pleasant," said Fred, "so like my father, for he was always one of us in our better days; but now it's all work and no play."

A little tired, Edward took his seat by the boy, and I overheard some of their chat.

"Yes," I heard him say, "it was a great disappointment, for I was preparing for college; but when my father failed I was ready to share his misfortunes, as I had been so blessed in his prosperity."

"How do you propose to finish your education, Fred?"

I saw the boy smile as he replied: "I must go to the country school, like the rest; but I don't feel as if I shall always be a farm boy; I think a way will open for me."

I saw Edward clasp the boy's hand, saying so heartily:

"God will bless you, Fred."

"Yes," he replied, "I think he will; but I miss my books so much, for I had a share in the library in the city."

"You are welcome to any books in ours, Fred," he said.

"Thank you, sir, I am so glad, for I can find time to read in the evening."

Then we adjourned to the parlor, and we entertained them with some music, of which they seemed very fond, the two making remarks which showed cultivated taste. They had fine voices, and Sarah played some lovely airs, the brother and sister singing charmingly.

"We've had a pleasant evening, Mr. Cuthbert," said Fred, as he stood, hat in hand, to take leave.

"I can assure you that I have enjoyed it," said Edward, "and hope that we shall often see you in our family circle."

As they closed the gate I said:

"Well, Harold, what do you think of our neighbors?"

"I think it's a great pity that such a boy should have to carry slops to the pigs."

"But remember, Harold," I replied, "that poverty is no disgrace, for our Lord chose his apostles from among the lowliest, and his dearest friends were among the poor; so he has taught us by his example how to balance wealth and goodness."

"If he were here in person," said Mary, "I guess he would have laid his hand in blessing upon Fred; but how about Jerome and Adele Carter?"

I replied, "I think he would have said, 'Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.'"

Chapter VIII.

THE CHURCH IN OUR HOUSE.

 HAVE often been struck with the language of the epistles when speaking of the primitive believers.

As there was no place of public Christian worship in those early days, we read the expression of "the Church in their house," when speaking of the worship in those times; and when I see dear Edward's ministry in our household it seems not improper to speak of "the Church in *our* house," for it is so impressive that we always seem surrounded by a holy atmosphere.

Our family prayers are not a cold, dry, or formal service; but, gushing warm from the heart, it interests all the household, for all attend upon these services—children, servants, all who dwell beneath our roof.

We read generally from the New Testament, especially the words and acts of our dear Lord, Edward making a few practical remarks.

Miss Spencer leads the music; and as our children have good voices it is a delightful part of our service, even little Flo joining with her sweet voice when she knows the hymns, and papa sometimes selects a hymn

just to please the dear child—"I am so glad that Jesus loves me" being a great favorite.

The children repeat a text daily, and on Sunday morning they recite the whole—three hundred and sixty-five in a year. Think of the treasure that my crown jewels are storing away.

We have a bank for family charities standing always on the mantel-piece, in which we drop our mites, and are often surprised to see how much is collected in this way when we open our bank.

Edward sometimes pays a visit to the factories in our neighborhood, and the other day we went together. I saw that he was a welcome guest among the operatives; for he walked among them as one of the same brotherhood, asking kindly questions about their work and their homes. I heard him say that he had something in store for them at Shadyside, and he invited men and women to meet him there on Saturday night.

He told me, on our way home, that he intended to give them an exhibition of the magic lantern; "but I do n't mean that it shall stop there," he added.

When Saturday night arrived, quite a goodly number of both sexes came, and were most pleasantly entertained by my husband. Then he told them that he had a large number of pictures from the Bible, and if they would meet him on Saturday evenings he would promise to do all that he could to interest them.

One dozen came to the first meeting; since then it has been constantly on the increase.

Thus, from small beginnings, Edward's Bible-class started, and I know now that it is on a sure foundation. It is so heart-cheering to see with what delight the members study the blessed Word.

Even some of the Roman Catholics step in sometimes with their work-fellows; but we soon miss them, for when the priest knows of their attendance on the class at Shadyside there is a speedy end of all that.

Edward interests himself, too, in their temporal welfare; for frequently I see one or two remaining, after the class is closed, to ask advice or tell of troubles, and Edward is always ready to listen.

Doctor Crofton steps in occasionally to cheer his faithful laborer, and says, "We may call this 'the Church in our house;' for here is family worship, domestic training, and brotherly love; here, too, a little missionary society; here the teaching of God's Holy Word; and here, too, I am gathering accessions to the Church, for every Sunday I see some new-comer, and this is the work of my assistant minister."

Edward is, indeed, the priest of his household, his lovely Christian character giving power to his teaching; for his life does not contradict his words.

The women, too, are deeply interested; and almost every evening one, or perhaps more, of these, my heavy-laden sisters, seek the sympathy of Christian kindness, and I am to give them my little help.

Thus I am becoming acquainted with the poor, and my visits at their homes grow out of this evening class.

We have a library, too; and it is so cheering to see how eager they all are to get these attractive books.

I often observed a sorrowful woman among the listeners; and, finding that she remained one evening after the class had closed, I took my seat by her side, when she told me the story of her trials.

She was a widow, with but one son, who had hitherto been a kind, dutiful boy; but Mike had got into bad company, and for the last six months had gone far, far astray. Poor Mrs. Sullivan seemed heart-broken, for her affections were set upon this one child.

"Can't you persuade him to come to the Bible-class?" I asked.

"I have often tried," she replied; "but he has no taste for such good things now, spending his evenings with his bad companions, often coming home at midnight."

I listened with a full heart to her sorrowful story, and felt that I must be brought closer to these toiling women; and I invited them to meet me on Friday evenings, when we would have a mother's meeting.

Six came, and I had provided myself with work already cut out, which was distributed among them when finished. It was really a pleasant sight to see them so cheerfully at work, and a more delightful task to tell them of the love of Jesus, who sympathized so tenderly with the poor and the suffering when he tarried among us.

Mrs. Bronson has come among us as a helper, and a most efficient worker she is.

We always closed our meetings with a hymn; and in a few weeks our numbers had multiplied, so naturally, for the women had told each other what might be found at Shadyside.

Edward's class prospered also; for the room was full now, and the men seemed deeply interested in the study of the Bible.

One evening Mr. Bronson and Fred stepped in among us, and I saw that Edward was embarrassed by the presence of his intelligent listeners, for the members were from the poorer classes, mostly from the factories. But I heard Mr. Bronson tell him that he considered it a great privilege to study the blessed Word in such a company; "for you know, my friend," he said, "that we are all learners."

I was so glad to see Fred, for I hoped he might be able to do something with Mike Sullivan; and after the meeting closed I told him the boy's history and the mother's grief.

He promised me that he would try to bring him to the class; "but I must n't go too fast," he said.

After a few evenings, Fred told me of the progress of his acquaintance with the boy, and I was quite amused by the wisdom displayed.

Thus he told his story:

"I found that Mike was very fond of base ball, and I went occasionally to the ground where the boys played. I soon singled out Mike Sullivan, and, understanding the game pretty well, Mike felt much respect for a boy that could beat him at the game; but

I was careful to conceal all knowledge of Mike's evil ways, for thus I knew that he would be scared off.

"One afternoon, when we were tired, we two boys sat down to rest, and I asked after Mike's mother.

" 'She is not very well,' he replied; 'for mother has to work very hard.'

" 'It must be a pleasant task for you to help her,' I said.

"Mike turned a sudden look upon my face, as if to question my knowledge of his ways, and replied:

" 'I can't do much; for my wages are very little.

" 'But of course you give all to your good mother,' I said; 'for she loves you very fondly, Mike.'

" 'Of course I do n't,' he answered; 'for after a hard day's work a fellow must have a little amusement.'

"I found that he was fond of these sports, and gave him some tools for a game of cricket, which I taught him, and thus got hold of Mike."

"What do you hope for, Fred?" I asked.

"Just to bring him to the Bible-class, Mrs. Cuthbert," was his reply.

I was, therefore, not much surprised to see Fred bringing the boy; and it did my heart good to see Mrs. Sullivan's grateful look when she saw her son thus introduced.

That evening Edward's subject was the Prodigal Son; and when he described the repentance of the wanderer, and the forgiving love of the father, I saw that Mrs. Sullivan's face was bathed in tears.

Mike, too, seemed affected when Edward applied the parable to the case of poor, wandering boys, led off, as so many are, by bad companions.

Then we sang the sweet hymn, which touched both mother and son :

“Come home! come home!
You are weary at heart,
For the way has been dark,
And so lonely and wild.
O prodigal child!
Come home, O, come home!

Come home! come home!
For we watch and we wait,
And we stand at the gate,
While the shadows are piled.
O prodigal child!
Come home, O, come home!

Come home! come home!
From the sorrow and blame,
From the sin and the shame,
And the tempter that smiled.
O prodigal child!
Come home, O, come home!

Come home! come home!
There is bread and to spare,
And a warm welcome there;
Then, to friends reconciled,
O prodigal child!
Come home, O, come home!”

Mike had a warm heart, and, not entirely hardened by the wickedness of his life, I saw that he was deeply touched; but Fred was too wise to say any thing to the boy just yet.

We all saw that a train of serious thought had been awakened in Mike's heart, and prayed that the Holy Spirit might be sent to bring the boy to true repentance.

He comes regularly to the class; and after a few weeks Fred told me that Mike had resolved to break away from his evil companions.

I thought of the sweet expression in the parable, "And when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him."

Mrs. Sullivan came to me with her story of Mike's repentance, saying:

"He brings me all his wages now; and I bless God for sending Fred Bronson to help my boy. I know that he is a real Christian, Mrs. Cutlibert, and I believe that God has a work for him to do in this wicked world."

I believe that the Father sees poor Mike yet a great way off; but I can leave the case with God as the pardoning Father and Fred as his humble instrument.

I have been reading to-day about Lazarus, where it says, so sweetly, "Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus." I wonder if it can be said of "the Church in our house," Now Jesus loved Edward, and Julia, and the dear children.

Chapter IX.

TRAINING OUR DARLINGS.

HAROLD is fifteen, and knowing that surroundings have much to do in forming the character of a gentleman, we have furnished his room with a neat suit, a pretty carpet, some pictures, and quite a number of tasty things to make it bright and attractive for the boys, for Wilbur occupies the room with Harold. There is a walnut book-case filled with the books that they have been gathering from their earliest years, and being the gifts of dear friends even the most childish are valued for the sake of the givers. There are many valuable books there, too, and the boys are very proud of their library, but the picture that pleases them most is the family group, handsomely framed.

The room faces the east, and I am sure that there is none more attractive at Shadyside than the bright chamber of our dear boys. Fine old trees shade the windows, and there is a lovely orchestra of singing birds that wake them up every morning with their sweet carols, their early song so soft and tender.

When every thing was finished we all met in the boy's room.

There sat Harold in his comfortable chair tossing

up his handsome head, looking around as proud as a king, and Wilbur, too, in a more quiet way, looked his thanks, and, pointing with his finger at his brother, he said :

“I have just told Harold that he must be a little more particular about his ways in this beautiful room.”

“There, now, Will, don’t preach,” he said, “and if I forget myself sometimes I know that you’ll look after me.”

“Ought n’t we be good boys?” Wilbur said, “with such kind parents. Look at that pretty pillow-sham; I know whose dear hands made that,” and then he threw his arms around me, kissing me so fondly.

Wilbur is by nature very neat, taking good care of his possessions, but Harold is not so by any means, and I am pretty sure that Wilbur will soon have to call him to account for his carelessness.

As I looked around I thought of a boys’ room that I had seen once on a visit to one of Edward’s cousins.

The house was handsomely furnished in the lower rooms, but I was shocked when I had a glimpse of the boys’ chamber.

Covered with a ragged carpet, the bedstead, bureau, and wash-stand all so shabby, a broken looking-glass, chairs with worn-out cane seats, the bed-spread so soiled, every thing of the roughest kind, and Mrs. Hunt said :

“We know what boys are, and so we give them what we don’t care for.”

I ventured to reply, "Don't you think that a neat chamber has a refining influence over boys?"

Poor fellows! their manners were quite in keeping with their chamber.

And we thought of all this when we furnished our children's sleeping-rooms. The girls' room is on the other side of the hall, and our Mary has a task before her in taming wild little Madge and making her orderly; but, if patient love can work the change, it will not be wanting.

I see that she watches the child, and if there is any thing amiss I hear her calling:

"Madge, I want you, just a minute, dear."

And the child, with a merry laugh, runs off saying:

"I guess I didn't put away my tooth-brush, and sister won't allow that; but she is so good, I am sorry to worry her, but I forget so often."

Allan and Flo occupy little beds in the room adjoining ours, and sometimes when they have retired I hear the little one talking so sweetly to Allan about the wrong-doings of the day. Last evening I heard one of these tender lectures:

"What makes you plague Madgie so?" she asked; "you know she doesn't like to hear about her pug nose."

"It's only a little fun, Flo; I don't mean any harm."

"But you see it makes Madgie angry; and I don't think that our Lord likes to hear you tease her."

"You are always talking about what Jesus says,

Flo, but I am not one of the heavenly kind of boys, and I forget so many times."

"I think it's very sweet, Allan, to try to please him in all that we do or say; mamma teaches us to do that, doesn't she, dear brother?"

"Yes, she does, and I believe that she tries to please him; but she's a woman, and I'm only a little boy."

"Yes, Allan, I know that; but I'm sure that Jesus will help us to be good, if we ask him."

And so they talked together a little longer, and then the soft, sweet silence told me that they were asleep.

I stepped in just a moment, and looked upon the sleepers, pressing a gentle kis upon their foreheads, and praying that God would bless my darlings, and I know that he will.

Our children are taught to salute their parents with a bright good morning, and after family prayer we sit around the breakfast-table, such a happy group of children, for we allow a little pleasant chat, perhaps about the flowers, but most about the animals. Papa made the children so happy by telling that Uncle Peter Kingston was coming out and would bring cousin Jack with him to stay a few weeks. And so the boys were planning their amusements all day, mending their fishing lines, hunting up their out-door games.

Uncle Peter is one of those dear, sunny old gentlemen that loves to make children happy, for, though

he is sixty years old, he has not forgotten his boyish days.

When papa arrived in the afternoon, the guests received a most hearty welcome, and the boys carried Jack off to the creek to discuss the Summer's sports.

Seated on the piazza, they were not aware of a listener so near, and Jack talked about the pranks of the city boys, but I knew that Harold had some shrewd suspicions that there were some marvellous accounts of adventures which he began to think had never happened, in which Jack flourished as the brave boy or the leader of all the fun.

Uncle Peter seemed quite at home with the young folks, and laying his hand upon Harold's head he said :

"How the boy has grown, Edward, and Wilbur, too; I suppose that he's the same book-worm yet; go hand me that valise, boy."

To Wilbur's great delight, the old gentleman brought out a set of new books, just published.

"This is just what I wanted, uncle," he said, as his eye glanced on the title-pages and found that there were Miss Yonge's Series of Histories and Higginson's United States.

Last evening I was so ashamed of Madge, for she came to the table in a high state of excitement, complaining about Allan. Making it a rule not to settle family disputes in the presence of strangers, I told Madge to be quiet; but she persisted in making us all uncomfortable, and, calling her to my side, I whis-

pered for her to leave the room, and so the little girl retired in disgrace; but after supper I heard her complaints alone, and told her, as I had often done before, that I would never allow squabbles at the table. Allan had been greatly to blame, and was obliged to keep his room for the remainder of the evening; but Madge begged that I would forgive him, for she could not bear to see him punished. I was so glad to see this family love.

Next day there was a fishing party, Uncle Peter captain in charge of the boat; and I went down to the creek to see them off, having packed a basket of nice things for the day's sport.

It was a very warm day, and I said:

"Keep out of the sun, children."

To which Harold replied:

"We will fish under the shade of the willows, mamma."

"Take good care of Madge," I added, as I waved my hand to the party.

Flo and I spent the day together, and a happy little girl she was, keeping house so sweetly in a corner of the nursery, running to mamma now and then with her innocent prattle. I often looked at the dear child with an anxious heart of love, as I see the marks of heavenly growth in her young life.

The boys brought back a good mess of fish, and Jane promised them for breakfast.

"I caught three," said Madge.

"And I caught six," added Allan.

"They were good children," Uncle Peter reported, "and we had a lovely day."

Yesterday we were grieved to hear of a railroad accident, in which John Gibson, who takes care of our garden, was killed.

The children were all so distressed, for John was a great favorite among them.

It is a sore affliction to the poor wife, for she has seven children, her husband her only support.

Our darling Mary came to me after supper to ask if we can't do something for the poor family.

The children each have a little bank, where they keep their savings, and Mary thought that they might do something for Mrs. Gibson.

Miss Spencer keeps their accounts for them, and we found that each child could give one dollar, and with Uncle Peter's help we raised among us twenty dollars, and Mary carried the gift in an envelope to the distressed family. She is always ready with her little donation, and dear little Flo gave hers too. When Mary returned she was full of the sorrowful scene that she had witnessed, for Mrs. Gibson was heart-broken, and the children weeping around their mother.

"John was a good man," the dear child said, "for I have often heard him talking to our boys about the Father of us all."

We try to teach our children that we all belong to one great family, bound to help each other in trouble,

and I am glad to say that there is not a stingy child among us.

I saw the dear little girls looking over their wardrobe, and I asked:

“What are you doing, children?”

“Looking over our dresses, mamma,” Mary answered. “Can’t we spare some to the little Gibsons?”

I promised them to see what we could do, and made up a nice bundle for the poor widow.

It’s so sweet to see this loving nature in our children.

Little Flo came with her second-best hat, and, handing it to me, she said:

“I want to give something, mamma, for you know our dear Lord likes to see us doing good.”

Thus she refers her most common acts to the Savior, whom she loves.

I made up a bundle just for darling Flo, that she might give it with her own little hands.

When she returned she said: “Mrs. Gibson was so thankful, but we couldn’t bring back poor John, mamma.”

“No, dear,” I replied, “but we can weep with those who weep, and that will comfort sorrowing hearts.”

Chapter X.

OUR NEIGHBORS.

WE consider them quite an addition to our social life; for, after supper, Mr. Bronson steps over, and I know that Edward enjoys the social chat on the piazza, both interested in farm life, especially about the cattle—for Edward is proud of his two Alderneys—and our neighbor, having passed his early life on a farm, has many hints to give. We are always glad to see his sturdy form crossing the style that separates our farms in his working clothes, for we know that he has something to say that is worth listening to.

He often tells anecdotes about his own cattle; for he says that there is as much difference in their dispositions as we see in men.

Then their talk runs on about the news of the day; for Mr. Bronson is an intelligent thinker upon all subjects.

I like to see his fatherly pride in his two children; and last evening, when talking about Fred, he said it was a great trial to see him deprived of the advantages of a liberal education. “But he is a noble boy,” the father added, “and I have a plan which I hope may enable us to place him at a good school yet—he is

only fifteen, and has an excellent foundation on which to build—but we have to work slowly. There is a corn-field which Fred takes care of himself, and we propose to devote the proceeds to that purpose.”

I saw that Edward was greatly interested, and I am sure that he will have something to do with that.

As he was taking leave, I brought out a basket of delicious pears, which I sent to his good wife; for Edward has been very successful in raising fine fruit.

After he had gone, I drew my chair close to Edward's, and asked what he thought about employing Mr. Bronson in the place of John Gibson, for we miss him everywhere.

“A bright thought, wife,” he replied; “but I wonder if he could attend to both.”

“His farm is very small,” I said, “and we need a good farmer in the place of the one that we have lost.”

“We'll think of it, wife,” he answered; “but, really, it seems quite possible.”

Next day, we saw Fred's bright face on the top of the stile, and, springing over, he brought a basket of string-beans and raspberries, saying, proudly, that he planted the beans, which were bearing splendidly; adding: “Father says that whatever we have to do should be done well; and I'm just as proud of my beans, Mrs. Cuthbert, as I used to be of my exercises in school. To be sure, I do n't like farm-work quite as well as brain-work; but it seems to be the work for me just now, and I do it cheerfully because it helps dear father.”

Then he told me that they had engaged Tom Gibson, John's eldest son, so that he had not so much rough work to do as formerly.

I was glad to hear that, not only for Fred's, but for the widow's sake.

"How would you like to help us, Fred?" I asked. "We miss John sadly, and I've thought that your father might come to our assistance: Mr. Cuthbert is away all day, and every thing is neglected."

"We're pretty busy, ma'am," he replied; "but father might get another hand, and I guess he'll do it."

"It is n't the work of a large farm, Fred," I said, "just the care of the flowers and the vegetable patch and the fruit orchard."

"Father will like that sort of work; for he has been studying that business lately, and he can do any thing that he undertakes, Mrs. Cuthbert."

"It might help that little fund in the corn-field, Fred," I said.

With a bright smile, he replied:

"Father told you about that, Mrs. Cuthbert."

"Yes; and I hope you'll have a fine crop, Fred. I shall watch the sun and the rain for your sake, my boy."

"Thank you, ma'am," said the boy, with a bow of his fine head; "you've given me something to think about."

I paid a visit to our neighbors, with Mary and Madge. Passing through the front yard, where there

were two lovely flower-beds, we stopped a moment to admire their beauty; for there were geraniums and pinks, phlox and petunias, heliotrope and mignonette, candy-tuft and verbenas, pansies and columbines, all tastefully arranged.

Standing there, we heard Sarah's sweet voice singing a lively song, and, when we entered, found her seated with her mother, busy at their needles; for cheerful industry is the law of the household.

Sarah handed us chairs with the grace of a little lady, and, laying aside her work, extended a heart-warm welcome to the girls.

The room was a picture of neatness, furnished, I supposed, with some of the plainest of their city home. There was a neat carpet, a comfortable lounge for husband when tired with his day's work, Fred's book-case, mother's sewing-machine, Sarah's work-table, and a few pictures.

Sarah Bronson was not a beauty; but there was the charm of modesty, the beam of intelligence in her dark gray eye, the smile of kindly feeling around her mouth, and a fine, rosy complexion of perfect health. To be sure, she was dressed in a cheap calico; but she wore a pretty white apron, made in a tasty fashion, her brown hair neatly dressed, and tied with a blue ribbon, and, altogether, there was something about Sarah Bronson very attractive to our young folks.

Mrs. Bronson looked just like the mother of such a girl, and we were soon quite at home in the cheerful sitting-room.

"You see, ma'am," said the mother, "that we are a busy pair; for we make all our own clothes, and do n't find much idle time."

Then she showed me such a pretty dress, only a twelve-cent calico, but it really was very genteel; and in a basket by her side were Fred's Summer pants and jackets, and, laughing, she said:

"Fred thinks mother's clothes are just as nice and well-fitting as we used to get at the tailor's;" and with a proud and happy smile she added: "And then it is a real pleasure to work for Fred; he is such a good, noble son. You know something about that, Mrs. Cuthbert."

Do n't I know what pleasure I take in working for my darlings?

Mary had a word for her mother, and she said:

"Mamma made this dress, Mrs. Bronson; and I think it's beautiful, do n't you?"

We two mothers enjoyed the chat of our children as they admired the work of their own dear mamma's hands.

Then we talked about the flower-beds, and Sarah said:

"They belong to Fred and me, Mrs. Cuthbert. He got a book about flowers, and studied it well. We planted the seed; but Fred did most of the work. You know, ma'am, he's so smart he can learn any thing. He's out in the hay-field now, with father. I do n't know what we should do without Fred."

"How does the corn-field flourish?" I asked.

“Finely,” said the mother; “and I do believe that the dear boy will realize something from his crop. Father says that it is very promising; and next week he will take the first from his field to market.”

Sarah invited the girls to go out and see some of her pets, and while they were gone we two fond mothers talked about our darlings.

When the girls returned, Madge chattered away about Sarah’s pet lamb, and wished that she had one just like Jenny. Then she told about the little ducks and goslings and downy young chickens; “but,” she said, “I would n’t like such pets, mamma, because I could n’t bear to see any of them killed.”

The day’s work was done; and Fred, in his farmer’s blouse, stepped in to see the visitors, his fine face aglow with exercise, so proud of his rich crop of hay.

Then he told me how he enjoyed the books that Edward lends him; for “work is done at six o’clock,” he says, “and I have a good long reading-time after supper.”

But the sun was sinking behind the hills, and we took leave of our pleasant neighbors; and the two children followed us through the front yard, Mary having a great many questions to ask Fred about the care of his flowers. Seeing how she admired his plants, he cut a beautiful bouquet, and, offering it to her, he said: “Will you accept of this bouquet, Miss Mary? It will afford me so much pleasure to give you a share of my flowers.”

We had a great deal of pleasant chat, when we returned, about our neighbors, and were so glad to hear that Edward had engaged Mr. Bronson to take John Gibson's place.

We soon saw that we had obtained a skillful gardener; for our vegetable patch produces finely, and our flowers show the fruit of careful culture.

Every day or two we see Fred's bright face crossing the stile, always with a bunch of his sweet flowers for Mary; but when she found that he sold them on market days, she hesitated about taking them, but papa said:

"We'll manage to pay for them, dear; for I will buy books for Fred that he can not afford."

And thus many a choice volume found its way into Fred's book-case.

We saw that the Bronsons had very little social life among the people, and we invited them to meet our pastor's family at our house. Doctor Crofton is an excellent pastor, and his wife, a most efficient help to the good man, among the most valued guests at Shadyside.

Mrs. Bronson and Sarah, Doctor and Mrs. Crofton, came in the afternoon, but Fred and his father to a late supper; for they had to change their field dress for a Sunday suit.

But it was really a well-chosen party; for the pastor was a good and learned gentleman, and soon found that his new parishioners were an acquisition in more ways than one.

The chat ran on pleasantly at the supper-table about the farmer's prospects; for the pastor had his own little farm, and the subject, of course, interested both parties.

Then the talk turned naturally to Church matters.

"We find it hard," said the pastor, "to get our people interested in weekly work; for they are nearly all farmers, and are pretty tired when the day's work is done."

I thought of the missionary boxes that were sent off to the toiling laborers in the far West; and when I proposed such work to Mrs. Crofton she caught at the idea, and I set Friday afternoon of next week for the first meeting at our house, promising to call upon several families in the neighborhood, taking care to invite the most humble of the farmers' wives.

Mrs. Crofton and Mrs. Bronson came early, and we had a good lot of work cut out when four of the neighbors arrived.

A little shyness at first soon wore off, when I told them stories about the good that had been done in this way among poor missionaries; and opening my secretary, I read extracts of letters from the wives of these faithful laborers.

I saw that the mother-love responded in their hearts when I read how happy the children were made by these love-gifts, and the fingers plied their needles heartily at the blessed work.

We sang a hymn at the close of the meeting, and

they all promised to meet again at Mr. Crofton's on the next Friday.

"We ought to be encouraged," said the pastor's wife, "not so much by the numbers as by the spirit with which they worked."

Uncle Peter gave us a handsome donation, and I went into the city to buy muslin, calico, and flannel.

When Friday came, six presented themselves, and with Mrs. Bronson and Sarah, Mary and I, and the good pastor's wife, we had quite a respectable bee. The girls undertook the aprons and children's clothes. And the pastor, stepping in among us, looked around with a beaming face, saying:

"This work is for the Lord, and I hope that we may say of our Christian women, at last, that they are, like the women of the Bible, 'succorers of many.'"

When he knelt among us and poured out his heart in prayer, I felt what a precious bond united all our hearts.

As our numbers increased, when all were furnished with work, one of the young ladies read an interesting book, and our little company never degenerated into a gossiping circle. Every week we added new stores to our large basket of finished work, and early in the Autumn we shall send off our first box.

We see that our little band is doing good in many ways; for thus fellow-Christians are brought together and a bond of sisterhood is cemented, and we know that God is blessing us.

Chapter XI.

MANLINESS.

POOR Jack Douglass! I must write it, he is so spoiled. Sister Sophy was always self-indulgent, such a pretty creature, whom every one petted. Marrying early, her married life, though so short, was a season of unlimited indulgence, for she never knew a cross until her husband died and left her a widow with one only son.

Our mother was Uncle Peter's favorite sister, and when Sophy lost her husband he took up his abode with her and adopted Jack as his own.

Very wealthy, he lavished gifts upon the boy, who never knew what it was to have his will crossed or his endless wants ungratified.

And here he is to-day, dressed in the height of fashion, with his gold watch and trinkets and diamond pin, so effeminate, not the least bit of manliness.

I see that Harold is much amused by his cousin's folly, for, although so gentlemanly in his habits himself, he is not the least girlish, and last evening he came to me with his account of Jack's dandyism.

"I wish that you could have seen Jack at his toilet, mamma," he said, "curling his hair around his fingers, powdering his face, turning over his different

neckties before he could choose one, and I said this morning, 'I think you ought to have been a girl, Jack.'"

"That is the fruit of education, Harold," I replied, "for he has always seen the decoration of the body preferred to the cultivation of the mind. He has been taught, too, that he is Uncle Peter's heir, and never expects to work; and thinking that he was born a gentleman, he acts in this foolish way."

"He must have some strange notions of being a gentleman," Harold said. "I think Fred Bronson, in his field-blouse, is more of a gentleman than cousin Jack. I do hate to see a sissy boy."

I smiled at Harold's earnestness, and I know that he is a manly boy, though only fifteen.

"Give me your ideas of manliness, my son," I said.

"Well, mamma, the other day I came across the definition of a true knight, and it seems to me that what made a manful fighter in those warlike days makes one now. I learned every word of that description;" and he repeated the extract:

"To speak the very truth, to perform a promise to the uttermost, to reverence all women, to maintain right and honesty, to help the weak, to treat high and low with courtesy, to be constant to one love, fair to a bitter foe, to despise luxury, preserve simplicity, modesty, and gentleness in heart and bearing. This was the oath of the young knight who took the stroke of knighthood upon him in the fourteenth century,

and this is still the way to win love and glory in the nineteenth.'"

"That is a beautiful character, Harold," I said; "but a Christian in this century is a still higher model, for in the manliness of our dear Lord we have a perfect pattern of what a Christian man must be." But I saw that this picture had taken strong hold of Harold's imagination, and was often amused at his attempts to copy the young knight.

The other day Fred made his appearance on the stile in his farmer's blouse with a basket of vegetables in his hand, for we buy all that we need of Mr. Bronson. As he came along with his free, manly step, whistling a lively tune, I saw that he accosted Jack as if he knew him, but his courtesy was returned with a cool and haughty nod.

Harold asked: "Do you know Fred Bronson?"

"He went to the same school with me last year, but his father failed in business and he was obliged to leave, but I did not know that he had turned clod-hopper."

"What do you mean by clod-hopper, Jack?" I asked.

"One obliged to do rough work," was his answer.

"Do you suppose that because Fred does hard work he can not be a gentleman?" But perhaps your ideas of a gentleman do not correspond with mine," I said.

"I call a man a gentleman who has been brought up in a refined and elegant way, with polished manners, quite above the common herd."

"And I call one a true gentleman," I replied, "who is brave, truthful, respectful to every one, high or low, rich or poor."

"But you wouldn't want us to associate with all sorts of common boys?"

"Not if they are profane or indecent; but if pure in language and correct in life they are entitled to respect from every one."

I saw by the toss of Jack's head that he was by no means convinced.

Next day Harold and he were out walking, when, passing Fred in his rough attire, Jack took no notice of him whatever; so Harold told me afterward.

But in a neighboring field there was a vicious steer, who advanced towards the boys with a menacing toss of his head, tearing up the ground.

Jack was terribly frightened, and Fred hurried instantly to his succor, running before the boy, facing the wild creature, calling out to Jack to jump the fence.

When safely over, he had the grace to thank Fred for his courage, who replied:

"I should not have liked to see that steer come much closer, for he would have tossed you over his horns in the wink of an eye."

Jack looked really ashamed to be obliged to own himself so much indebted to the clod-hopper.

When Harold had finished his story he added:

"I think Fred Bronson is one of the true knights, mamma."

"You did not always think so, Harold, but allowed

yourself to judge of the boy by his work, and not by his worth."

"I am learning better lessons, mamma."

It is a great pity to bring up a boy in such a foolish way, for really the poor fellow acts as if he thought that the world was made for him.

The bitter fruits of selfishness are seen every day in his character, but what will it be by and by, when he reaches manhood?

When I see how kind Uncle Peter is to the boy I feel so indignant at his want of respect to the good old man, for Jack never thinks of offering him a chair when he enters the room. But our boys see the slights, too, and Harold hands him the best seat, Wilbur brings his cane when he walks out, Mary his slippers when he is tired, and even little Flo hands him a nice pear when he comes in from a walk, but Jack looks on quite contented that others should perform these offices.

I heard the boys talking the other day about their sisters, Harold telling what a dear girl Mary is, and Wilbur excusing Madge's faults, for, although she has so many, she has a warm, loving heart.

"It's a pity you have no sister," Harold said.

"Do you think so?" Jack asked. "I should find it quite a bore to have to wait upon them because they are girls, for that's what you do all the time."

"And don't you suppose that it is a great pleasure to do so?" asked Wilbur.

"I must say that I would rather be waited upon, boys," was his answer.

"I'm sorry for you, Jack," Harold said. "Don't you see how happy we are at home?"

Just then Mary came in with Harold's gloves, that she had mended so neatly.

"Here, brother dear," she said; "I've done my very best, but they are much worn out."

"You're a good soul," he said, kissing her rosy cheek.

With a bright smile upon her sweet face she called Madge to follow her, and the child pretended to pout as she said :

"I guess I'll never learn to be careful."

"Yes you will, dear," Mary replied, "if you will only think that bad habits make your friends unhappy and give so much trouble."

I saw that Jack was thinking seriously of what he sees in our domestic picture, all so different from his own home.

But habit is a hard master and slow to conquer, and the boy is not aware how fully that foe to true happiness had gotten possession of him.

In the afternoon we took a ride in the large carriage, but I saw that Jack took a seat on the shady side, leaving Uncle Peter in the sun.

Our boys would never allow that, and Harold soon changed seats.

I saw the dear old gentleman receive the courtesy with moistened eyes, and heard him sigh as he glanced

at Jack spread out on a seat with two, instead of three, which could accommodate three easily.

I'm so glad to see this thoughtful love in our dear children; but we began very early, teaching the little ones before they could talk to share their good things.

Last evening Harold came to me with a very serious face, and I saw that he had something important to say.

"I don't like to tell tales, mamma, of a guest," he said, "but I want to ask, Is it ever right?"

"Sometimes, Harold, it is duty," I replied. "If you saw any one in danger of setting fire to a house by carelessness, and you had remonstrated in vain, it is then a duty to report."

"Is there any other reason?" he continued.

"Yes, Harold, if you saw one secretly dropping poison into a cup of coffee, you should report at once."

"Well, mamma, what about a bad book?"

"You should not only refuse to read one, but you should report the presence of such a book in the house."

"Well, mamma, Jack has a very bad book in his possession, and asked me to read it. I saw by the pictures that it was an improper book, and refused to look at them; but Jack laughed at me, and called me green; he said all the boys that he knew read such books, for it was only fun. When I asked him if his mother knew that he had such a book, he laughed and said, 'You don't suppose that I tell mamma every thing that I do.'"

I was really shocked, for we have been so careful to keep our boys out of the reach of such poisonous trash.

Then Harold stopped a moment, hesitating to proceed, but he said slowly:

"Jack talks about vulgar things, mamma, and I told him last night that I would not listen to another word."

"And what did he say, my son?"

"He laughed at me and called me Miss Molly."

I kissed my darling boy, for as long as he comes to me with his loving confidence I hold him safe from such corruption.

But I called Jack to my room and asked to see the book that Harold spoke of. He blushed crimson as he replied:

"It is my book, Aunt Julia, and I have a right to read what I choose."

"But such a book can not be harbored in my house, Jack," I said, decidedly.

Then I talked kindly to the boy and tried to point out the dangers of such reading. I saw that he was touched, and going to his room he brought the book, which, at a glance, declared its vicious character, and in his presence I consigned it to the flames.

Before we parted he promised that he would not indulge in any improper communications to my dear boys, but I shall be glad when Jack Douglass takes leave of us.

Chapter XII.

MADGE IN TROUBLE.

NCLE PETER proposed to go into the city on some, business, and Jack took advantage of his absence to take a ride on horseback with Harold. I knew that he was a troublesome companion, but I can trust my boy's courtesy.

They were gone two hours, and Jack had a dismal account to give of how hard the horse trotted, and how dreadfully he was frightened; but Harold told me aside that it was all his own fault, for he would not pay any attention to Harold's directions, and the horse soon understood that he carried a novice on his back.

Jack returned in an ill humor, and made us all uncomfortable.

Towards evening Uncle Peter and Edward returned, the former bringing a beautiful aquarium for Mary, an artist's case for Harold, a velocipede for Allan, a doll for Madge and Flora.

I was sorry to see clouds on Jack's face; for when they were all admiring the pretty gifts he stole away, and it was only too evident that he was displeased.

There were six gold and six silver fish in the aquarium, and it was an object of great delight, espe-

cially to Allan and Madge. I saw that, like all busy young ones, they were disposed to handle the globe, and I warned them several times, reminding them how easy it would be to break such a brittle article.

Harold was charmed with his case of artist's tools; for he has quite a taste for sketching, and was much in need of many things.

"You are so good, Uncle Peter," I heard him say. "I have wanted these things so long; and now I can go to work in earnest with my pencil."

Next day, off he started with Wilbur and Jack, to sketch a view from the hill back of the house. Wilbur was much interested in his brother's work; but I saw that such employment had no charms for Jack, and he soon appeared on the piazza, ready for a trip to the city.

"Do not stay all night," said Uncle Peter; "for your mother is not at home, and I shall be anxious."

"Do n't be troubled about me," said the youth; "but I do n't make any promises."

I saw that he had a small valise in his hand, and Uncle Peter asked why he carried it with him; but the boy laughed, saying:

"It's always best to take a change, for we do n't know what may happen. If I do n't return to-night, do n't be uneasy; I may stay with Felix Stratton."

So he went off, whistling. Uncle Peter said:

"Jack is a hard boy to manage."

"He does n't seem to be managed at all, uncle," I replied.

“Too late to begin now,” was the answer, “especially when his mother is so indulgent.”

Harold was surprised, when he returned, to find that Jack had gone to the city; but when I told him about the valise, he replied:

“I am afraid that he’s off on a lark, mamma; for I heard him talk about the fun that he has with Felix Stratton.”

Harold had made a lovely sketch of the pretty landscape, and all day was so busy with his pencil that he quite forgot Jack Douglass; but the boy did not return that night, was absent all next day, and when another night passed Uncle Peter could not conceal his uneasiness.

“I can guess where he has gone,” Harold said; “for I heard him talking about an excursion to Coney Island, saying that Felix had written to ask him to join a party to that favorite resort.”

Another day passed, and yet no tidings of Jack; but when the cars came out Jack came strolling in, telling what a glorious time he had had, in company with three other boys.

Uncle was so glad to see him that he had no words of chiding; but I could not help saying:

• “Is n’t this rather too much liberty for a boy of sixteen? for you do n’t know, uncle, how he spent his time, or who were his companions.”

The dear old gentleman had said truly that it was too late now to draw in the reins.

The two children were never tired of looking at

the pretty fish; for, although Allan's velocipede and Madge's doll were so attractive, the aquarium seemed to be the most fascinating object.

Last evening, we heard the two chattering about the fish, when there was a sudden crash and a scream, and, hastening to the library, a scene of destruction met our eyes; for there lay the globe, shattered into small pieces, and the beautiful fish scattered all around.

I soon gathered them up and placed them in a basin of water, and then I asked how it all happened.

Poor Madge was in great distress, sobbing bitterly; and Allan said that Madge broke it, and she, in turn, charged it upon her brother. I was sure that neither was telling a falsehood, but in the fright both were confused. Uncle Peter was looking on, and I took the children quietly to my room, where I could question them calmly. It was long before I could get at the real truth; for, although I did not for a moment suppose that either would deceive, it was possible that they might be mistaken.

"Now, Madge, be quiet, while I question Allan," I said. "Did you never touch the aquarium at all, Allan?"

"Yes, mamma," he answered; "I moved it once from side to side, to make the fish lively."

"And then Madge moved the globe a little more?"

"Yes, mamma; I told her to take care. And then I rocked it gently, to stir up the pretty fish."

"And then you rocked a little harder," sobbed Madge.

“And then your hand slipped, and down fell the the aquarium,” said the boy.

“And this is the real truth?” I said.

“Yes, dear mamma,” sobbed Madge; “and I am so sorry for Mary’s beautiful aquarium.”

“But did n’t you know that you were doing wrong?” I asked.

“I was so full of fun that I did n’t stop to think,” Madge replied. “But I am the one that ought to be punished, mamma.”

“Since you have been so truthful, Madge,” I said, “I shall not punish you; for the sorrow that you feel is punishment enough.”

Mary behaved so sweetly; for, although it was a real grief, not a word of reproach fell from her lips.

“You shall have another,” said Allan, “just as soon as we can make up the money from our bank.”

“You would n’t have gotten off so easily with me,” said Jack; “for you had no business to touch the aquarium.”

I know that they will try to make up the loss, and I shall encourage them, for I know that is the right thing to do.

After supper, Jack had a long story to tell Uncle Peter about the delights of Coney Island, and what a grand time they had at the hotel, telling how Felix had treated them to sherry-cobbler.

I felt so sorry to hear the boy; for this is the way that our fast young men begin.

Last evening I heard Allan and Madge counting up the deposits in their banks.

“We won’t have any thing to give to the mite fund for some time,” said Madge.

“That is true,” Allan replied; “but we must replace what we have broken first.”

Uncle Peter has heard of their intentions, and I know that the old gentleman will manage to drop a coin in now and then, for they keep their banks on the mantel-piece in the dining-room.

After the lapse of a week, Madge called out:

“How is this, Allan? My bank is getting heavy, and I know that I have n’t put much in.”

At the close of another week we concluded to open the banks, and, lo! several half-dollars had been dropped in each, and when counted up we found that there was enough to purchase another aquarium.

Next day, when Edward brought out one quite as pretty as the lost one, the children were in a gale of pleasure. Madge, throwing her arms around Mary, called out:

“There, dear, is your beautiful aquarium; and we are so glad.”

I kissed the children, and I knew that a sweet lesson had been taught to the two wild kittens.

Mary took Madge by the arm, leading her off to the play-room; and the child returned with dancing steps, showing off the lovely suit that sister had been making for her doll while Madge was in trouble.

“Just see what Mary has done for me; and I broke her aquarium!” she said, with moistened eyes.

When I looked at the beaming face of my sweet child I said, “Well may we call her our Morning Glory.”

I know that Madge is very trying sometimes; but the fountain of sisterly love never fails, and I see how it is blessing our darling Madge.

The sewing circle is prospering, having now twelve regular members, and we have sent off our first box to a missionary in the far West.

The girls' eyes sparkled with real pleasure as the two folded up the little aprons and calico slips, and our Morning Glory said:

“Won't the mothers be glad when they open this box!”

Our good pastor says that it is doing good in many ways, bringing the members of the Church together, doing the Lord's work as fellow-pilgrims.

Would that we could see among us that precious unity of apostolic days, when they had all things in common, bearing each other's burdens; but the world has encroached sadly upon the Church. Will it ever be what the Master intended when he uttered that memorable prayer, before he suffered?

The Summer is drawing to a close, and Sister Sophy is spending a week with us previous to taking Jack home. She is proud of her handsome boy, and often talks about his beauty; but, alas! she does

not see what a light, frivolous character she is forming.

I had a little sisterly talk with her yesterday, but she only answered :

“Jack’s prospects are so brilliant that I do not see any great necessity for the training of which you speak.”

“That might answer, Sophy,” I said, “if this world were all; but we are only in the vestibule of our being, where we are preparing for a higher, better life than this.”

She was silent; and all that I can do is to pray that her eyes may be opened.

We are all feeling a little sad; for Harold will enter the Courtland Institute this Fall, under the care of President Lennox.

Miss Spencer has laid a good foundation on which to build; and I believe that our boy’s moral principles are of a sterling character, so that I can trust him now among a world of boys, pretty sure that he will steer safely through the dangers he may meet.

Wilbur and he are devoted to each other; and I saw them, last evening, walking up and down the piazza, with arms around each other’s waist, and I knew that they were talking of the parting. Then they went out to the stable, to visit their dumb favorites; and as Rover skipped after them I heard Harold say, “You must not forget me, old fellow.”

Mary, too, will miss her brother; and the dear girl is making so many nice little things for his com-

fort—for he will be a weekly boarder in the family of President Lennox.

Miss Spencer is grieved to part with Harold; for she has had charge of him for eight years, and there is a strong bond of attachment between the bright boy and the gifted governess.

I see that Fred Bronson looks on the preparations with a wishful eye; but he is very hopeful, for he told me yesterday that his fund from the corn-field is growing, and he hopes in another year to join Harold. I should be truly glad, for many reasons; for I know of no boy that I would prefer to Fred for our dear Harold's friend.

Our city friends have gone; and our family circle becomes each day more thoughtful, for Harold's departure is the first break in our nest of love.

It is Sunday night, and to-morrow Harold leaves us for the city.

Mary brought a beautiful morocco case for notes, made by her own dear hands, and a needle-book, too; for, she said:

“You will not have mamma to sew on buttons now, Harold, and you must learn.”

Madge, too, brought her gentleman's pin-cushion, marked with Harold's name, and well filled with pins.

I handed him a blank book, in which to keep a diary; for thus I hope still to commune with Harold's heart.

Harold and I spent an hour in my room, when I

gave him a new Bible, with the words, "To Harold, with mother's love," written on the fly-leaf.

He promised me to read it every night before retiring; and then we knelt together at the mercy-seat, where I poured out my full heart to our Father in heaven, praying that he would bless my boy.

When we arose, I laid my hand on Harold's head, and said:

"Remember the teachings and the prayers of this room, my son, and may they guide and bless you all the days of your life."

All Harold's associates have been carefully chosen, his reading directed, and the holy example of his father before his eyes; but I want to see the fountain cleansed.

I know that he despises falsehood and impurity of all kinds, that he is the very soul of honor; but he is like the young man that Jesus loved, to whom he said, "One thing thou lackest."

I thought of my crown jewels when I laid my head upon the pillow that night; and when I saw him wave his farewell to us as long as he could see us on the piazza, I prayed, from the depths of a mother's love, "May he be found among the jewels in the Savior's crown on the day when he gathers in the blood-bought gems!"

O, for grace to lead them all safely home to Jesus!

Chapter XIII.

A NEW WORLD FOR HAROLD.

E miss the dear boy from our family circle, for he was a bright sunbeam at home, with just enough of the willfulness of youth to excite our anxieties, and the ingenuous consciousness of many faults to stimulate our hope.

In his new and untried life he is so sanguine and drew such a picture of what he hopes to be in the world. Dear boy, he does not know yet any thing of the temptations of companionship, or the sources of evil that lie so quietly hidden in the human heart.

I see how Wilbur misses him, so depressed all the week, for they are wrapped up in each other, and Wilbur is so proud of his brother, anticipating the highest honors in his school-life.

He looks after his flowers so tenderly and keeps his own little diary, too, that Harold may know what he is doing at home every day.

We are all watching for Friday afternoon, when he returns to stay until Monday.

Mary is gathering some delicious pears for brother, and Allan is mounting the apple trees to pick off some of the best fruit, while little Madge receives them in

her apron, dodging her curly head now and then for fear of a bump from frolicsome Allan.

We are all waiting on the piazza for the return of our dear boy, and when we heard Rover bark we knew that he was not far off.

Arm in arm with papa, carrying his satchel, we spied him advancing with tripping steps among the trees, and Wilbur flew to meet his brother, not ashamed to kiss his downy cheek. I hope he never will be.

"This is good," said Harold, as he stood upon the piazza, in the midst of this noisy group; "it is very pleasant at the institute, but there is no place like home."

As we surrounded the supper-table it was quite amusing to hear Harold run on with praises of Professor Lennox.

"I expected such a thing of rules, mamma," he said; "you mustn't do that, and you must do this, that I wondered what it all meant, when I asked what they were. The professor smiled as he replied, 'There are very few, Harold, but they cover the whole ground of a boy's duty, where truth, honor, reverence, purity and kindness are the fundamental law, but they must be obeyed.' I thought, mamma, of the young knight, and already I felt proud of our professor."

After supper he handed me his diary, saying aside:

"That is for your own eye, mamma."

Edward watched his opportunity when we were

alone to tell me of his visit to the institute, when he called for Harold.

“You have a bright, promising boy,” the professor said, relating some incidents which showed that he understood our boy, and our parent hearts felt that we had chosen a wise preceptor for our son.

While the children were enjoying their feast of fruit I retired to my room to read my boy’s diary:

“A handsome school-room, well lighted and ventilated, furnished neatly, with charts and maps adorning the walls, and in a rapid glance around the room I saw that there was every thing necessary for a thirsty scholar.

“Such a crowd, all staring at the new boy, which I felt was not very polite, but perhaps I might do the same.

“I was charmed with Professor Lennox, a tall, slender gentleman, with such an eye, so bright and luminous; I am sure that no boy, however cunning, escapes that. Then his smile was so sweet and kindly, and when he laid his hand upon my head with such fatherly words of welcome my boy-heart went warmly out to the genial professor, and I felt that we should be great friends.

“He led me to a seat near a gentlemanly-looking boy, saying: ‘You will remember that Cuthbert is a stranger, Miffin.’

“The boy extended his hand, saying heartily: ‘We are comrades.’ And handing me a hymn book I found

that we opened school with sacred music. I liked that, for it seemed so like home.

“One of the professors played on the organ, and I wish that mamma could have heard the full chorus of the boy-voices as they sang—

“ ‘Soldiers of Christ arise,
And put your armor on,
Strong in the strength which God supplies
Through his eternal Son.
Strong in the Lord of hosts,
And in his mighty power,
Who in the strength of Jesus trusts
Is more than conqueror.’ ”

“Then the prayer was just a few solemn reverent words, praising God for what he is and what he does as king, for what we need; and I felt that Professor Lennox looked upon his scholars as intrusted to him to train for useful lives on earth and blessedness in heaven.

“It was Monday morning, and I waited to hear the rules. They were so very few, and I thought how are the boys to know what is expected of them; but I soon found out that the whole spirit of the school is the teacher, and there does not seem to be any of that spying that I expected in a large school, the boys are so much more trusted than watched, and I felt that we ought to be ashamed of ourselves to deceive such a noble teacher.

“Every day we have a short lecture on the character of some distinguished man from all the grades and occupations of human life, and we are taught to

feel that every thing is honorable if pursued conscientiously.

“Professor Lennox tries to make us wise concerning all that is good and noble, and simple concerning evil, for we never have details of the course of a wicked man, rather something to look up to, something to aspire after.

“The professor knows what boys are made of, and so he directs and not represses our bounding animal spirits, joining with us in our sports.

“He gives us plenty to do, for every moment in school is occupied, and so we have no time for mischief. There are five minutes of letting up at the end of every hour, but when recess arrives we fly out into the open air and enjoy a half hour of merry, boyish sports.

“We boys like order and discipline, even if it be somewhat of a military character, and I should like the folks at home to see the boys when the bell rings for return to study. In a second every one is in the line, the professor at the head, and in single file we re-enter the school-room, all prime for work, cheeks glowing, eyes sparkling, hair a little tumbled, to be sure, but ready for exercises that are so congenial to our dispositions.

“I am so thankful to Miss Spencer for all that she has done for me, for, owing to her excellent instruction, I was able to take my place among older boys, while several poor fellows older than myself had to go into the lower classes. Then her lessons of truth and

honor are invaluable, for she taught me from earliest days to despise all meanness.

"I see instances of this here among some of the lazy boys, for only yesterday I met with a case of a boy of seventeen, an overgrown, indolent fellow, who will never study if he can avoid it.

"In one of the study hours I saw Gilbert copy from his neighbor's note-book, on a small slip of paper, and I watched the fellow, for I knew that he was after some mean trick.

"We sat near each other in the class-room, and I perceived that the boy kept his fingers between the leaves of his text-book, and saw the slip of paper that I had observed on his desk.

"As we passed into the next class-room I said, scornfully:

"'I should think that you feel pretty small, Gilbert, after the trick in the class-room.'

"'What do you allude to, sir?' he asked.

"'You know well enough, you mean cur,' was my hasty reply. 'Where did you get the notes on your slip of paper from?'

"'That's none of your business, sir,' he answered, "'I'll black your eyes for you if you don't hold your impudent tongue.'

"I saw that Gilbert was white with rage.

"When we met at recess it was plain that he meant a fight, for, approaching me with doubled fists, he said:

"'I'll teach you not to meddle with me, sir.'

"I stood quiet for a moment recalling the lessons at home about brawls and replied :

" 'I don't want to fight, Gilbert; I never had a fight with a boy in all my life.'

"Then he laughed scornfully, and said:

" 'You must be a great coward, then, and now you've got to fight.'

"I saw that he was larger and stronger than I, a real brute of a boy, but I wasn't going to stand still to be pummeled by him. Then he flew at me and gave me a sharp blow between my eyes, and I defended myself as well as I was able, but I was no match for Gilbert. If it had not been for Miffin, who stepped forward, I should have been horribly abused; as it was, I had a bloody nose and black eyes.

"At that moment Professor Lennox came forward, his dark eyes blazing, as he said:

" 'What do you mean, Gilbert? The play-ground is no place for brutal fights.'

" 'I mean, sir,' he replied, 'that Cuthbert shall not be a spy upon me.'

" 'What has he done?' the professor asked.

"But Gilbert refused to reply and I was silent, but our wise preceptor said:

" 'I will answer for Cuthbert. If he has really incurred that name there must have been something to spy; but remember, boys, quarrels can't be settled in this way at Courtland Institute.'

"I saw that all the boys were on my side, and I am sure that my parents and Miss Spencer will say

that I was right. But Gilbert always avoids me, and I, too, keep out of his way.

“Next day the professor told us stories of heroic boys in such a beautiful way, so high and elevated, that I long for just such traits of character, and now I really don’t feel very angry with Gilbert, but would like to do him some good. We have such a pleasant fireside, only six boys, who are weekly boarders like myself, and Ross Gilbert, who is the only yearly boarder. Mrs. Lennox makes it like a real home for the boys, for after the study hour we gather in the family parlor, where, with her sewing or knitting, she sits among us like a good, kind mother. She puts me in mind of my dear mamma, only she is not half so handsome. Sometimes we entertain her with our boy-songs, and she, in return, has her fund of stories.

“The other day when we were alone she told me Gilbert’s story. He is an orphan with no near relative, under the care of a guardian, who really has no love for the boy, and having lived so long without a home he has become cold and selfish.

“I felt sorry for the boy, and made up my mind to try to win him by kind offices, but he does not understand me, and thus far repels my advances. I really like Henry Mifflin better than any of the boys, and we were drawn to each other from the first day when I entered school. But he is a very delicate boy, and Mrs. Lennox fears that he has inherited consumption from his mother. But he is different from the others,

always a gentleman, kind and courteous to all the boys, truthful, conscientious in all that he says or does, certainly guided by higher principles than those around us.

“The other day, at recess, Harry Desmond uttered an oath in his presence, and I saw the flush of indignation that passed over his face when he rebuked the boy with such impressive words:

“‘You must not swear by that holy name, Harry, in my presence,’ he said.

“‘I forgot that we had a saint among us,’ replied the boy with a sneer.

“‘I am not a saint by any means,’ he replied, ‘but I profess to be a servant of the Lord, whom you dare to speak lightly of, and I will never hear his name abused.’

“This was the first time that I had known Mfflin to be a Christian, but I might have been sure of that, for, although his piety is not paraded in words, I see that all his actions silently proclaim the truth. Gilbert is subject to violent attacks of sick headache, when he suffers keenly, sometimes in his bed for a whole day. Yesterday he had one of these spells, and I felt so sorry for the orphan boy. Mrs. Lennox is so busy with her family cares that she had no time to spend with the invalid, but I went into his room before school opened and found him suffering severely.

“I closed the shutters, shook up his pillow, wet a handkerchief in cool water, binding up his head, asking him if he wanted any thing.

"I saw that he was touched, for he took my hand, saying, 'You are very good, Cuthbert.'

"I know that I am not; only human.

"I told him that I was sorry for him and would come in again at recess and see what I could do for him. I remembered his grateful look with so much pleasure when I took my seat in the class-room, and at recess asked Mrs. Lennox if I might take him a cup of tea.

"It was soon ready, and I hurried with it on a little waiter to the sick boy.

"'That is just what I need,' he said, 'for my head is getting better, and after a cup of tea I shall go to sleep and soon be all right.'

"Then he thanked me so warmly, and we were friends from that day. I am glad that I was able to practice one of my home lessons.

"Dear mother, she don't know how deeply they are impressed on our young hearts."

I closed my boy's diary and blessed God for its contents.

Then I descended to the parlor, where I found Harold and Miss Spencer in close conversation; a merry laugh now and then proclaiming his amusing account of his first week in school. But when the chat became more serious I knew what they were talking about.

Just then a letter arrived from Percy Crofton, saying that he expects to spend Christmas at home.

Our children were delighted with the news, for

having enjoyed the benefits of Miss Spencer's instruction for several years in company with our flock, he is a great favorite with the family group. At seventeen he was ready for college, and had been absent from home for one year.

Miss Spencer was equally pleased, and it was quite amusing to hear the reminiscences of those pleasant days and the plans for making a happy Christmas for their former companion.

Chapter XIV.

THE HOLIDAYS.

E are all together again, such a happy group of merry children, and Harold has brought his friend, Henry Mifflin, to spend the holidays with us. He is an interesting boy, and I am glad that Harold has such a room-mate; but there is a delicate look about the boy that seems to forebode a short life.

Finding me alone, after supper, Henry drew a chair close to my side, and, taking out a miniature case from his pocket, handed it to me, saying:

“That is my dear mother, Mrs. Cuthbert. You remind me so much of her.”

It was a sweet face, bearing a strong resemblance to her son.

Then he told about his early life, and the sweet ministry of a departed mother, until the deepest feelings of my heart were drawn to the speaker.

“I have neither brother nor sister,” he continued, “but Harold is like a brother; and although we are so different—he so full of life and spirit, so gay and frolicsome, and I so much more serious, for my state of health has made me so—but I do sincerely love Harold, he is so noble and truthful, and such a warm-

hearted boy. I wish he was a little more thoughtful about eternal things; but I have bright hopes for Harold, for I know that he is the subject of many earnest prayers, and I think is sometimes the subject of serious impressions. But his Christian life will be no hasty act; for he despises shams, especially of a religious character."

Then Henry told me many incidents of my dear boy's life at school that warmed and cheered the mother-heart.

Just then Harold appeared, saying:

"I have been looking for you, Henry; and here you are, shut up with dear mamma, talking about your wild friend, I dare say."

"Nothing very bad, Harold," was his answer, with a pleasant smile.

"A great deal, Harold, to make me very happy to find that you were a room-mate with Henry Mifflin," I said.

Then Harold told of some of his pranks.

"But remember, dear mamma," he added, "that I never join the boys in any sly tricks; I'd be ashamed of myself if I could do such things in the house with our professor. But come, Henry, we are going to have some games, and can't do without you."

Next day there was a wild storm of snow and high wind, and in the midst of it Percy Crofton arrived. After supper he ran over to Shadyside, and Harold introduced his friend to his old schoolmate.

But how he had grown!—a half-head taller than Harold, the one eighteen, my boy sixteen.

After the first salutations were over, I saw Percy appropriating Mary to himself, as was the custom at school, and they were soon engrossed in pleasant chat over those happy days, often laughing heartily as they recalled the past.

Percy has no sister, and, therefore, is very fond of our Morning Glory.

I saw that he handed a small package to his companion, whose bright eye sparkled at the sight of a charming Christmas book.

Running to show me the gift, she said:

“Is n’t Percy good to bring me such a gift? But I have something for him, which will appear on Christmas Eve.”

I thought how pleased he would be with the beautiful gift she had made for his themes at college—a pretty black velvet case, worked with a border of silver thread, with his initials on the back.

The storm seemed to be on the increase, the wind howling around the house, and the snow-drifts piling up in fine style.

“This is grand,” said Harold, opening the hall-door; “we shall have some fine sleighing to-morrow.”

He was a true prophet, for in the morning the ground was covered with snow; and soon after breakfast the party set off for a grand sleigh-ride—all but little Flo, for I could not trust her with such a romping set of youngsters.

It was a good thing that the pet was safe at home; for when they returned Harold had a wonderful story to tell of an upset in a very high snow-drift.

"No one was hurt, mamma," he said. "But you ought to have seen Madge covered up with her wrappings. She looked just like a cotton-ball; and we had some trouble to get her out of the drift, her hands were so tight in her muff."

"I did n't mind it one bit," said brave little Madge; "I think it was jolly fun."

Percy came over again next day, and I saw that he had something for the private ear of his old friend.

When he found that I was alone he sought an interview, saying:

"I have good news for you, my dear friend. I suppose that you have heard of the revival among our boys at college."

"Yes, Percy," I answered; "and I hope that you have received some of the mercy drops."

"Unworthy as I am," he said, "boundless grace has found me, I trust, and brought me to my Savior's feet. I have often had many serious thoughts; for how could it be otherwise in such a household as ours? But while I have all my life been in the habit of daily prayer, I have found that the heart was not in the service, and when I saw others melted under the power of a Savior's love my heart seemed so cold; but the Spirit touched it at last, and, convinced of sin, it brought me to my Savior's feet. And now, believing, I have peace with God."

I thanked God for the good news; for, knowing what a gifted youth Percy is, I hope that he will be led to the ministry of the blessed Gospel.

"As soon as I obtained a hope of pardon," he said, "I asked, What wilt thou have me to do, Lord? and very soon my heart responded, I would serve thee, dear Master, by proclaiming the riches of redeeming grace."

"I have always hoped for this," I replied; "and now may God bless you, and lead you to a high and holy walk with himself."

And so we communed together of heavenly things.

When shall I see the same in dear Harold? There is a mountain of pride to be leveled there; but grace is all-sufficient to humble the proudest.

I have no doubt that the Spirit is leading Mary and Wilbur in the narrow way; for I see so many marks of a child-like, humble temper in both that my heart is full of hope.

I look at my crown jewels with the fondness of a mother's love and the faith of a trusting Christian, and I believe that they will all be jewels in the Savior's crown.

I found that Percy had sought a private talk with our dear Morning Glory; for they have always sympathized with each other in all their joys and sorrows.

When Percy had gone, Mary came to me with a beaming face, and told Percy's story.

"What a lovely Christian he will be, mamma!" she said. "And won't dear Doctor Crofton be a

happy father when he hears him telling of the unsearchable riches of Christ?"

In the first glow of Christian love, Percy is very happy; for he knows nothing yet of the toils and conflicts in the Christian's path to heaven. But he is in the hands of a Good Shepherd, who will not lead him into the rough places while he is but a lamb.

The girls are very busy in making preparations for Christmas Eve, Sarah Bronson helping in the good work. For they are going to have such a feast as Jesus blesses; for has he not said, "But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou shalt be blessed; for they can not recompense thee?"

They are putting finishing touches to some useful and pretty things—hoods, scarfs, mats, and dolls, for girls; scarfs, gloves, and warm stockings, for boys.

Jack Douglass has been invited to spend the holidays at Shadyside, but declines, preferring the excitement of city sports.

There will be a tree, too; for how could we dispense with that on blessed Christmas Eve?

I find that Percy still claims the privilege of the school-room; for last evening, after supper, I saw the two at a side-table, with Mary's books spread out, and Percy encouraging her to tell her story of progress.

He was always especially interested in her attempts at composition, and I overheard some of his words of praise that brought a sweet blush into the face of our Morning Glory.

When they closed the books Percy stepped over to me, saying :

“I am glad to see Mary’s improvement, and hope that you will allow her to write to me when I am at college.”

I was sure that such a correspondence would be very helpful to our dear child, and I gave a ready consent.

Next Sunday there will be quite a large accession to the communion of our Church, and dear Percy will be one of the new members.

Mary had much to say about the fact, and came to me with a touching expression of humble desire in her sweet face.

“Dear mamma,” she said, “I wish that I might be one of that happy company; for I know that I love Jesus, and want to obey his last command. You know how he said, ‘Do this in remembrance of me.’ He did n’t say any thing about great preparation, only just those precious words, ‘Do this.’ If you tell me to do any thing I do it at once, because I love you so; and ought I not to love my dear Savior still more?”

I listened to the dear girl with the deepest interest; for I have always looked upon her as a child of God, and have doubt that she is invited to the feast, and I replied :

“Consult Doctor Crofton, dear, he is your best guide.”

On the same day she went alone to the pastor’s study.

He told me afterward of the interview, saying that he had seldom heard a more simple and touching account of the dealings of the Holy Spirit with a young heart than fell from the lips of our darling child.

And so she will be admitted next Sunday, with Percy, to the communion.

“She is, no doubt, one of the Lord’s dear lambs,” said the pastor, “and must not be denied the children’s bread.”

Now comes some of the recompense of a mother’s loving, trusting prayers; for it has always been my custom to pray with my children in private, first giving myself to God, and then my dear children, through Christ. It is but giving him his own; not to do it is robbing God.

But what deep humiliation I often feel at my own shortcomings; for do I not remember that the first book read, and the last laid by, by my child, is the conduct of his mother?

I was so struck the other day by an anecdote concerning one of these lambs, when a little child had been very naughty, and, being sharply reproved by his mother, was sent to his room to confess his sin to God, where the mother overheard her boy saying, “O Lord, make me a good boy, and make my mamma better, too.” What a lesson for a mother!

Next day, Fred Bronson came over with his wagon; and the boys set off for the woods, to bring in the Christmas boughs.

Madge was bent on joining the party; but being

denied, with a burst of indignation she declared that she "could climb trees as well as any of the boys,"

"And that is just the reason why my little girl can not go," mamma said.

When I saw her disposed to pout, I pointed to the door with a look that she understood; for I never allow pouting in the family. Such work must be far away from all the rest—it is quite enough for one to be uncomfortable; and so Madge went quietly into retirement.

The boys returned with a fine load of boughs, and set to work in earnest to decorate the parlor, and the library also, where the Christmas-tree was to be dressed. Fred Bronson was head workman; for I saw that both his strength and skill were quite a lift, for it took his power to plant the tree securely in the box. When all was finished in the library, spectators were dismissed, and Mary and Sarah Bronson dressed the tree.

It was, indeed, a beauty, with its pretty fairies and its dainty love-gifts.

When the guests arrived, in the evening, I doubt if there could be found anywhere a happier set than gathered around the Christmas Tree in the library at Shadyside.

There were John Gibson's seven children, six from my class in Sunday-school, and Fred had brought lame Johnny Rawle and his sister in the wagon, for he said, "The poor little cripple shall have a taste of Christmas joy, too."

Scarfs hoods, and pretty mats were distributed among the girls, and warm gloves and scarfs among the boys; but darling Flo gave the dolls, saying, "I named them all."

Each child had also a bag of sugar-plums and a slice of cake, and lame Johnny had a pretty book also; and he said, with beaming eyes:

"I thank you, dear Mrs. Cuthbert; and Fred, too, was so good as to bring me. I have such sweet gifts to show mother."

Percy was charmed with Mary's gift, and said, laughing:

"I know that I shall be envied by the boys when they see my beautiful case; and I expect that it will hold some of your letters, Mary."

Our own flock exchanged their love-gifts, and Henry Mifflin was not forgotten.

Then we sang a sweet Christmas hymn, and Percy made a few touching remarks about the name of the Babe of Bethlehem, charging the listeners never to forget that his name was called Jesus because he saves his people from their sins.

Our sewing circle, too, sent off a box of clothing, with some Christmas toys, to the family of a Western missionary, and I can easily imagine the joy that its opening will spread in the household.

Truly, "it is more blessed to give than to receive." Would that we could do more of such holy work.

But I must not forget that Edward gave a beautiful book to Fred; and Sarah was made happy by

the gift of one of the prettiest work-boxes that I could find.

The following Sunday was a day to be remembered; for Percy and our Morning Glory publicly owned Jesus as their dear Master, sealing their vows of allegiance at his blessed table.

Wilbur was much affected, but Harold said :

“ Mary was just as good as she could be before she took this step. I do n't see why she needs profess her faith, for her life speaks volumes.”

“ She is obeying her Master, Harold,” I answered; “ and there is no true discipleship without some mode of confessing his name.”

A sweet thoughtfulness marked her deportment all day; and I pray that our Morning Glory may adorn this profession of the Master's holy name.

After supper, I saw her throw her arm around Harold, and I know that she whispered some words of love in her brother's ear; for, proud as he is, I think that his heart was touched, for he turned away to hide the moisture in his eyes.

The holidays are at an end, and we are separating once more.

I am glad to have met Henry Mifflin; for I believe that his modest, but firm, example speaks powerfully to our Harold.

And I follow Percy Crofton with my feeble prayers, for I believe that Jesus has work for him in this sinful world.

Chapter XV.

A BUGLE CALL.

HAROLD has been gone a few days and here comes the diary:

“Here I am, at school once more, and, although I was so happy at home, am really glad to be at school, for I like to be at work.

“It is such a bright, cheerful place; just let me draw a picture of our sitting-room, for we boys are admitted to the family room, for we are really a part of the family, and Mrs. Lennox the mother.

“No wonder that we like to be there. Not at all stylish, but so comfortable, with its open fire of bituminous coal, and its pretty pictures of former pupils, whose memory is cherished by the good lady.

There she sits, with her knitting or sewing, and little Rose on a chair by her side. She is a sweet child of ten, and though there is but this one, she is not at all spoiled.

“It is the first evening of our return after the holidays, and Mrs. Lennox encourages us to chatter in a lively style about the joys of our visit. Rose brings out her Christmas gifts, tells how happy she was, and wonders if the angels come now on Christmas Eve,

for she is very sure that they smile upon this world on that blessed night.

“I don’t see exactly how it is, although I suspect; but Mrs. Lennox seems to know when I have not had a very good report, and it would make you happy, dear mamma, to hear her stirring words calling us to duty. She reminds me of what I read the other day, saying, that ‘there are some women like sweet clarion notes of inspiration to duty.’

“I know two just such women, and am I not a happy boy to have two such mothers watching over me?

“While Mrs. Lennox makes all due allowance for boy-nature, and her words are always cheerful and loving, they leave the impression that we are preparing here for life’s earnest work, and we can not feel that we are only born to please ourselves, but that we belong to the God who created us, and that we are bought with a precious price.

“We closed our first evening at school with a feast of apples and nuts, for little Rose knows exactly where to find them, and likes to distribute them among the boys. I always get a large one.

“Next morning we resumed our studies, and I wish that you could have heard the professor’s address, just like a bugle call. He made life appear so solemn, and our responsibilities so great. Then he spoke of the road that lay before us, and described in glowing language the different classes of young students. He told the story of life’s temptations and duties, of the world’s wickedness, and the great need of earnest

workers. He showed us that in every sphere, high or low, there was work for us to do; and when he spoke of the struggles of some heroic souls starting from the humblest walks in life, leaving their work upon their generation, he stirred up the young blood and made our cheeks glow with excitement.

“At the conclusion he looked around upon us with his eagle eye, and, with a clear bugle call, he urged decision, and asked who was ready to join this army of young workmen for the Lord. When the enemies of the truth are so daring and so fierce, who is ready to obey the poet’s call?

“‘Life is real, life is earnest,
And the grave is not its goal.
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

In the world’s broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of life,
Be not like dumb driven cattle,
Be a hero in the strife.

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time.’

“I wish that you could have heard him repeat those grand words. It was indeed a bugle call, and the most thoughtless seemed impressed; all but poor Gilbert.

“What a grand man he is!

“It had made us very thoughtful, and at recess a group of boys might have been seen talking over the

professor's address. Mifflin seemed very serious, and, calling me aside, he said:

“ ‘With my feeble health it is not much that I can do, Harold. My heart answered the call, but my failing frame can only serve my Master by patient submission.’ ”

“Then we talked over the different professions, and I wondered what mine would be.

“ ‘I own, Mifflin,’ I said, ‘that I would indeed desire nothing higher or better than to occupy just such a position as Professor Lennox.’ ”

“He looked surprised as he answered, ‘I thought that your ambition would soar beyond that, Harold.’ ”

“But there sat Gilbert, so sensual and so stupid, with his desk filled with candies, and his brain so dull he never took in one word of the professor's words, but I know that I did. I have not the smallest sympathy with poor Gilbert, and really I can scarcely tolerate his society.

“Now, mamma, I know that you will say, ‘Do n't boast of your superiority, Harold, for who made you to differ?’ ”

“Mrs. Lennox understands me, too, and sometimes I feel ashamed when I see that she detects my vanity.

“When she administers a few wholesome hints little Rose often adds a word or two, for we are great friends, and she seems to take the place of Madge, only she is not such a witch of mischief. The other day, when her mother was dropping a few kind words, she drew up close to me, and said: ‘You must be a good boy

and mind mamma, Harold, or I shan't love you one bit.'

"Jack Douglass is still at school, but makes no real progress in his studies. Gilbert and he are quite intimate, and Jack was invited to spend the evening in Gilbert's room, in company with a few of the boarders.

"I found that wine and cards were on the table, and knowing that such things were forbidden, I was sure that Gilbert was practicing deception, and very soon left the company, taking little Nat Thurston with me. He is a delicate boy, very timid and afraid of the elder boys, and I saw that they were urging him to take wine, and I could not stand that. I made no report of the party, for I despise the business of a tale-bearer; but Tom, the waiter-boy, had discovered the deception, and reported it to the professor.

"Next day Gilbert was called to account for his breach of rules, and I really felt sorry for him when I saw him the object of the boys' scorn, for we are all taught to despise meanness. If there is any thing that Professor Lennox abhors it is the meanness of deceit, and there was a loud blast of the bugle when he exposed the wickedness of tempting a little boy like Nat Thurston.

"Gilbert had really no supporter but Jack Douglass, and although such a fat, overgrown boy, he looked so small under the professor's withering rebuke.

"Nat is a dull boy, and has been so often ridiculed for his want of smartness that he has no heart for

study, and sometimes says that 'it is no use for him to try.'

"But he has a talent for sketching, and draws beautiful maps, which really teaches him geography.

"The professor will make something out of that, for he takes an interest in the boy, and tells him that he has power which he does not exercise.

"I saw that words of praise inspired him with new zeal in his efforts for improvement.

"Then he spells so correctly, quite ahead of the more gifted boys, and the professor pats him kindly on the cheek, with the words:

"'We'll make a scholar of you yet, Nat; don't get discouraged; a boy that does such fine work, spells so correctly, and is so industrious, can do much more. I know of a very gifted bishop who was called the dunce of his family until he was fourteen, and now he is considered one of the highest in the House of Bishops.'

"When the professor turned away Nat said with a bright smile:

"'Isn't he good, Harold? I'm going to try right hard, and the boys shall not laugh at me any more and call me ninny and numskull.'

"The bugle had roused poor little Nat, and I mean to watch, yes, and help, too.

"Next day the professor stepped up to Nat, saying, with a bright look of encouragement, 'I am so glad to hear such a good account of you, Nat; all your marks creditable to-day.'

“ ‘That’s your work, professor,’ he replied, ‘for I feel wide awake now, and I know I’m not a dunce.’ ”

“ Nat’s course is now steadily onward. To be sure he has a hard road to travel, for he is not bright, but he perseveres, and when he comes to me with his questions I do like to help him, often hearing him recite his lessons. ”

“ The professor has found out that poor little Nat has been for some time the fag of the elder boys, and is often miserably abused by them. ”

“ I am so glad that it was discovered, for our professor is not a man to tolerate any such persecution, and calling up the ring leaders he sounded his bugle among them, and there was the end of it. Some of them tried to declare their innocence, but in the presence of the professor Nat told exactly who were the offenders, and the little fellow was delivered from bondage. Released from this servitude it was really amusing and very touching to see how he watched the professor’s movements, always ready to wait upon him, so anxious to show his gratitude. Sometimes when he thought that he was not observed he contrived to leave a nice apple on the desk, and made it his business to keep his tumbler supplied with fresh water, and he looked so happy when the professor would say to him, in his own kind way: ”

“ ‘Thank you, my little friend ; you’re a real clever fellow.’ ”

“ The boy is quite a study for me, for he is really making headway. ”

“The other day, at recess, some of the boys were entertaining their comrades with an account of Bob Ingersoll’s lecture, which they had heard the evening before, relating some of the coarse jokes of the blasphemer, casting contempt upon the Bible and the Great Creator.

“The professor was attracted by the loud laugh of the listeners and overheard some of the stories.

“Standing directly in front of them he said, in his most ringing tones:

“‘Is it possible, George, that you could listen to such abuse and think it a subject of laughter? Surely your parents did not know that you were there.’

“‘Father took me,’ he replied, ‘and though he doesn’t believe in Bob Ingersoll, he thinks that he is very smart and very amusing.’

“‘I am sorry that he took you, George,’ was the answer, ‘for the presence of intelligent men and women gives encouragement to such displays of vulgar ignorance.’

“‘A great many Church members were there,’ he replied, ‘and laughed as heartily as the rest.’

“‘The greater shame for them, then,’ he said, and then blew a blast from his bugle that brought more boys around him. I wish that Bob Ingersoll could have heard him ask, ‘And what can the poor creature give us in exchange for God’s blessed Word? Don’t go again, George; he is scattering moral poison, and I can’t consent for one of my boys to be ruined; would you go, my son, to such a lecture if you knew

that your father's character would be traduced? and yet you could listen calmly to the contempt cast upon our Father in heaven, who sends us all our blessings.'

"Does not this bugle stir up the boys of Courtland Institute, always on the side of God and duty?

* "I listen to him with such a proud sense of what he is, and when I am studying the problem of my future life the picture of our grand professor rises up before me, and seems to say, 'Follow me.'

"I often ask myself, What shall I choose? Not the profession of a lawyer, for I don't feel inclined to become familiar with men's bad conduct; not a physician, for I am too keenly alive to human suffering; not a merchant, for I shall be tired to death in counting up numbers; not a tradesman, for I could n't tolerate the measuring of goods by the yard; not a clergyman, for, although it is the highest and noblest calling of humanity, I would not dare to intrude upon these sacred ranks with my present character. But this high-toned professor with his power of moulding and training minds for usefulness, has much attraction, and if I thought that I could only be like our stirring professor I should be content. What do you think of that, mamma?

"I have just received your letter telling of the arrival of a dear little sister. You name her Lilly. Of course we shall all love the sweet pet when she is more than a lump of flesh and blood, when she is quite awake and we can play with baby.

Chapter XVI.

A JEWEL EARLY SET.

FLO is such a feeble child that I have always felt that we hold her loosely. She is a beautiful little one, with a profusion of blonde ringlets, deep blue eyes, the sweetest dimpled mouth, always dressed in smiles, with such a delicate complexion that I often ask, Is this crown jewel of mine is to be early set in the Savior's glorious diadem? For she is such a heavenly child that I can not but feel that she is being rapidly polished for another and higher state of existence.

We often take our walks together, and yesterday being a fine day, we started to visit the little cripple, Johnny Rawle.

Becky had filled Flo's basket with a few eggs, some ripe fruit, and nice biscuits, and the darling was so happy, for it is her greatest joy to give.

Passing along, she often stopped to gather the wild flowers by the road-side; and giving me a little bunch, she said:

"Isn't God good, dear mamma, to give us such lovely flowers?" handing a small branch which she thought very pretty.

But while I thanked her, I said :

“Those are only weeds, dear.”

“I wonder if there were any in the garden of Paradise,” she said.

“Never, dear, until the ground was cursed by sin. Listen to the terrible words that God spoke to Adam : ‘Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee.’”

“What a pity!” Flo exclaimed; “but Miss Spencer says that weeds will not always grow among the flowers.”

“That is true, my love,” I answered; “for when Jesus comes to destroy the works of the devil there will be no more thorns and briars and ugly weeds, but every thing will be beautiful—no weeds, no storms, no pestilence, no sin, no sorrow, no death.”

“What a happy world it will be then!” she said.

We stopped at last at little Johnny Rawle’s, and found the poor child very weak, and suffering.

Flo handed her basket to Mrs. Rawle, with the words :

“There is something for Johnny.”

And taking the child’s hand, she said, so tenderly :

“I am sorry for you, Johnny; but Jesus can help you to bear your pain. Only pray to him to give you patience—you know he loves little children, for did n’t he bless them when he was here on earth? I hope that he has blessed you, Johnny.”

Then she took out of her basket a ripe peach, and

asking Mrs. Rawle to pare it, she handed it to the child, with the words.

“That is one of God’s gifts, Johnny; ought n’t we be very thankful? But he gave us something better still when he sent his Son to die for us. I hope that you love Jesus, Johnny.”

Then we passed on to the Gibson’s; and here, too, Flo left some of her sweet gifts and sweeter words.

They were so glad to see the child; and Mrs. Gibson said:

“I’m sure that God sends your little girl to bless us, for she often cheers my heart by her kind words; and when she talks to us I feel that our Heavenly Father has not forgotten us.”

She is only six, but, young as she is, her influence is felt by the children at home, checking many an impatient word, and I often hear Madge saying, “Now, don’t do that; it would make Flo so sorry.” For the dear little thing often reminds them of the Master’s teaching.

It really seems as if she had imbibed the sweet spirit of the Christmas angels, keeping peace among the children, for she often says:

“‘Peace on earth, good will toward men;’ that’s what Jesus came to give.”

There can’t be any jarring where Flo is.

Becky and Jane tell me how she prattles in the kitchen about Jesus, and say that they know she is a heavenly child and will soon be carried away by the angels.

When we returned from our walk she complained of being tired, and asked to sit on my lap, begging me to sing "The Old, Old Story," saying:

"That's what I love to hear, mamma; there's nothing like the love of Jesus."

I feel anxious about the dear child—there does n't seem to be any disease, only increasing debility, and sweet, heavenly tempers.

Four weeks since I wrote the last word, and now, where is my darling?

Polished so early for the Savior's crown, she is gathered home.

I overheard Wilbur and Madge recalling the past, her memory is so sweet among us.

We all remember the day when she took her place in school as a pupil; for she had learned to read with me, dear child.

How sweet she looked, in her pretty white apron that I had made for the new life, her hair tied with blue ribbon, and such a conscious look of importance on her sweet face.

There is her little desk, her picture hanging just over it.

Mary opened her desk, and it was in perfect order, just like my darling.

There, too, is her "Book of Daily Food," that she loved so dearly, and fed her sweet spirit from so faithfully.

There, too, is her pretty work-box, and the last

piece of work that she ever did, her needle where she left it, in her little handkerchief.

Every one had something to tell of her sweetness; and I thought of my darling as a blessed spirit, "following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth."

She is the first of my crown jewels gathered for the Master, and shall I refuse to yield her to him who hath purchased her with his own precious blood?

When I know how blest she is, can I wish her back again in this weary world, where there is so much sin and sorrow?

And yet the dreary blank left by her departure is so heart-rending. No words can tell what waves of sorrow sometimes roll over my fainting heart.

One day, when not quite so weak, she told me that she wanted her clothes to be given to Mrs. Gibson, for her children; "for there are so many to clothe," she said, "and Mrs. Gibson is so poor."

Then she asked to see her bank; and when we opened it we found that it contained nearly five dollars, that she was saving for the next missionary box for the West, which she wished to be laid out for the children. "And tell them," she added, "that it was sent by a little girl gone to heaven."

Uncle John had sent a contribution for her bank, which helped to swell the amount.

It wrung my heart to listen to these requests; but they are sacred legacies, and all shall be done just as she desired.

The dear Lord was very merciful to my darling;

for her departure was only the same as going sweetly to sleep.

These bereavements are heart-breaking, and what should we be without the hope of reunion in a brighter, better world?

Jane and Becky have so much to tell about the dear child, so many little incidents.

Becky is subject to bad sick-headaches; and she told, with tears in her eyes, how Flo would wait upon her, bathing her head with cool water, shutting out the light, walking about on tip-toe, and when Jane make her a nice cup of tea it was Flo's little hand that carried it to the bedside.

And then they told how she would talk about her Savior, and sing her sweet hymns of praise to her dear Lord, for "do n't we know that she was one of his own dear lambs?" said Jane. "And we promised her that we would read our Bibles, and pray every day for the gift of the Holy Spirit, and we have not forgotten our promise."

I gave each of them a copy of "Daily Food," telling them that Flo was so fond of the little book; and I had a copy of her likeness taken for each of these faithful servants.

But how we miss her sweet voice at family prayers no words can tell, for she always sang the hymns that she knew; but now we think of her as one of that great multitude of little children who sing the praises of redeeming love in the presence of the dear Redeemer.

It is through much tribulation that we are brought home to glory; for I feel that this bereavement is drawing my heart heavenward.

Hitherto my path has been by the still waters of domestic sunshine, which has made the world such a happy home; but the Lord is teaching me that "this is not our rest."

Chapter XVII.

EASTER MORNING.

I HAVE been sick for two months, confined to my room, and take up my pen to-day for the first time.

So much there is to record of loving kindness and tender mercy from the hands of my gracious Father.

It is one thing to know Jesus as an historical person, and quite another to know him as a blessed Savior, a sympathizing brother, "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." There are so many expressions in the Epistles which speak of the depths of Christian experience, and it takes sickness and sorrow to teach our dull hearts the meaning of these unsearchable riches.

"Risen with Christ," "the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ," "hidden with Christ in God," "partakers of the divine nature," "dwelling in Christ and he in us."

Love to Jesus and panting after holiness seem to be the burden of apostolic teaching, and holiness the great boon which Jesus came to bestow, for what regenerate soul could be satisfied with pardon only?

or how could we enjoy heaven without the meetness for the inheritance.

Then the command is, "Be ye therefore perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect."

"Be holy, for God is holy."

O for "the perfect love which casteth out fear, for fear hath torment."

The Lord has been very good to me, saying, "Tarry thou here." May I not hope that he whispers, also, "While I go and pray yonder?" for is he not always praying for his weak, trembling children?

Did he ever turn aside from one that sought his pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace?

Such passages as these are very, very precious:

"Great multitudes followed him, and he healed them *all*"—not one or two of the company only, but he healed them *all*.

"O for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame,
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb."

I am tired now, and must lay down my pen awhile.

What a blessed ministry surrounds me every day!
My crown jewels, so loving, so devoted.

The other day Allan brought me the first snow-drop, the sweet harbinger of Spring, so beautifully called "The snow-piercer."

In a few days afterward Madge came in with some lovely crocuses.

“Are n’t they lovely?” she asked. “I came across a poem the other day which set me to hunting. I was afraid that it was almost too soon, but I found all these. Shall I read the poem, mamma?”

In her own sweet way she read the following:

“THE SNOW-DROP AND THE CROCUS.

“Deep down in the ground, on a cold Winter bed,
A crocus and snow-drop had long since seemed dead;
But deep in the earth,
Where the flowers have birth,
They both had been watching the snow overhead.

Said Snow-drop, “I’m sure there is stirring below,
Just as soon as I’m called I am ready to go.

The long frozen juice

Now begins to unloose.

Get my hat and my cloak, I do n’t fear the snow.

Good-bye, now, dear Crocus, I hear the sweet voice
Of the Spring as she’s calling, O do n’t we rejoice?

Get ready, my dear,

You have nothing to fear;

Get your very best coat, and your Spring hat so choice.

With a coat of green leaves, and a hat of pure white,
Little Miss Snow-drop, with a step quick and light,

Was the first one to go

Piercing through the cold snow

With a smile for the watchers, so cheery and bright.

And early one morning, through a deep wintry bed,
She is piercing a snow-drift with her pretty white head.

Two children were there,

Both with light, curly hair—

‘O here is a snow-drop,’ the little one said.

They plucked two or three with their plump little hands,
And placed them in water on dear mamma's stand.

The sick mother smiled
On each sweet little child,
For they spoke of a life in the beautiful land.

Then tulip and hyacinth watched for their hours,
And the earth was soon filled with the fragrance of
flowers,

With promise of rest,
Of a rising so blest,
When the glorified dust shall arise in God's power."

Our Morning Glory brings her work, and while she
sews we talk of heavenly things.

It is Easter morning, a bright resurrection day.
The bells of a neighboring village are ringing out the
joyous chimes. It really seemed as if they said:
"Christ is risen, Christ is risen indeed."

Mary has just finished my wrapper. Dressed in it,
and seated in my easy-chair, I was ready for family
worship, for on this bright day Edward proposed that
we should rejoice together.

He read the story of the resurrection and made
some of his sweetest remarks upon the blessed theme.
Then we sang our Easter hymn—

"Christ the Lord is risen to-day,
Sons of men and angels say:
Raise your joys and triumphs high,
Sing, ye heavens,—and earth, reply.

Love's redeeming work is done,
Fought the fight, the victory won;
Lo! the sun's eclipse is o'er,
Lo! he sets in blood no more.

Vain the stone, the watch, the seal—
 Christ hath burst the gates of hell;
 Death in vain forbids his rise,
 Christ hath opened Paradise.

Soar we now where Christ hath led,
 Following our exalted Head;
 Made like him, like him we rise,
 Ours the cross, the grave, the skies.”

Then we surrounded a throne of grace all together,
 for Harold and Wilbur were at home for the Easter
 holidays.

After this I taught the resurrection hymn for the
 young of the flock, but we all sang it, for we were all
 children on this blessed Easter day.

‘Now the bursting Spring awakes,
 Now the flowers bloom,
 Now the sleeping insects creep
 From their wintry tomb.

CHORUS.

Ring the chimes! ring the chimes!
 Easter day! happy day!
 Ring the chimes! ring the chimes!
 Blessed Easter day!

Now the birds are flying home,
 Singing as they come;
 Now the world is full of joy,
 Spring, bright Spring has come.
 Ring the chimes, etc.

Many little children sleep
 In their lonely tomb,
 Where the angels keep their watch
 Till the Savior comes.
 Ring the chimes, etc.

Now we hail the Easter day,
For it sings to me,
Christ the Lord is risen to-day,
Thus he will raise me.
Ring the chimes, etc."

Then came the love gifts.

A picture of Easter morning, beautifully framed, from Edward; a copy of *Children in Heaven*, handsomely bound, from our Morning Glory; from Harold, one of his own pictures, prettily framed; from Wilbur, a lovely calla in a china pot; from Madge some sweet hyacinths; from Allan, a pretty vase filled with violets!

Wasn't I a happy mother? and didn't I kiss my crown jewels and pray God to bless them and spare them to me many years, spare them for his blessed service.

Tears filled my eyes as I looked upon Edward's lovely gift, for the sweet picture of Easter morning spoke such whispers of heavenly comfort as I thought of my little Flo, so early gathered for the Savior's crown.

"But we shall have her again, Edward," I said.

I have long since answered submissively the questions of Longfellow's Reaper, and can say now I give my fairest.

Then I repeated some of the beautiful lines:

"My Lord has need of these flowerets gay,
The Reaper said and smiled;
Dear tokens of the earth are they,
Where he was once a child.

And the mother gave in tears and pain,
The flowers she most did love;
She knew she should find them all again
In the fields of light above.

O not in cruelty, not in wrath,
The Reaper came that day;
'T was an angel visited the green earth,
And took the flowers away."

Madge came hanging around me with her loving words.

"Do you know, mamma, how pretty you are?" she said; "and what a lovely wrapper!"

"I hope that I shall always be pretty to you, my darling," I answered.

I wondered what was coming next, for Mary spread out a little table with some of our best china, and then a sponge-cake of Jane's own making was set in the middle, having a card attached to it with her name, "From Jane Withers."

Then followed a large bowl of Southern strawberries and cream, and we had a delightful feast on this Easter morning.

Sparkling little Lilly was the brightest of the guests, for she is running round now, prattling so sweetly, nearly two years old.

"Has n't mamma dot a beauty party?" she asked, "such pitty flowers and red strawberries! I know who sent them. Sadie Bronson brought them last evening. There, now; say, sister, I did n't tell."

We are a blessed company, indeed, sitting so happily among the sweet promises of an early Spring, the

bright sky, the lovely flowers, the ripe strawberries, the song of the birds outside of my window, and, above all, the resurrection hopes.

I repeated the grand words of the apostle: "If you, then, be risen with Christ seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God."

"But, mamma," said Madge, "if we are all the time thinking about things above, we should be so serious, not a bit like children."

"That's a great mistake, dear," I replied; "little children are not called to seek the same kind of heavenly things as grown people."

"How is that, mamma?" she asked.

"Yours are very sweet duties, Madge," I said; "Jesus wants you to be a good, obedient child, a loving sister, and a little girl that wants to do good to every body; wouldn't that be happy? Now, suppose that in the sphere where God has placed us we try to do his holy, blessed will."

I do believe that the Easter blessing descended upon us on that holy day, for there was such a sweet spirit of love among our children.

I have tried to let the child-life dwell among us as long as it will in the hearts of our flock, for cares and trials will come soon enough.

When I was left alone how earnestly I prayed that my crown jewels might all be found in the Savior's crown of glory when he comes to gather all his blood-bought gems.

Chapter XVIII.

OUR MORNING GLORY.

T has been a long time since I have written in my diary, for I have not the heart to keep a family record where Flo's dear name no longer appears as one of its beloved members.

She gave her canary to Madge while she was sick, and now its merry carols sound like a mockery; but still I love the bird, because it is a relic of my darling. And so Cherry sings while I write.

Her departure has cast a shadow over the household; for her gentle ministry was so sweet. Even our wild Madge is subdued, and I often see her sitting in a pensive mood, and believe that many serious thoughts have been awakened by this bereavement; for she often comes to me with questions about death and resurrection.

I see marks of spiritual growth about our dear Morning Glory, and last evening she came to me with her sweet confidence, asking how she might best serve her dear Lord and Master.

I told her that the Lord chooses all our lot, and appoints the work of his children, and it seemed to me that the calling of a daughter and sister was the path just now for our dear child.

"Can't I do something in the Church, dear mamma?" she asked. "But the classes in the Sunday-school are all provided with teachers, and I can't see my corner."

"The Lord will direct you, Mary," I replied; "only ask for guidance, and watch the leadings of Providence."

She always shows me Percy's letters. They are so helpful to a young Christian, breathing a spirit of the purest affection, and holding up high aims in the heavenward path.

I will give an extract below:

"Life is very sweet, dear Mary; but let us give it all to Jesus, for he is worthy of our purest, warmest love. Let us study his blessed character, as it is revealed in the Gospels, and under the teaching of the Holy Spirit we will thus learn to love him who is 'the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely.'

"If we truly love him, we shall want to serve him by a life of holy obedience and devoted love.

"Don't let us forget that we took the vows of a Christian profession on the same day, and thus took the Lord for our God, and his service for our chief joy.

"Look around, dear, and see how you can best serve him.

"There are so many poor, needy, and ignorant souls in this world that we do not have to look very far to find plenty of work. Are you doing any thing for Jesus outside of your home? If not, try to find some needy souls who crave your help.

“Let us live close to God, for he is the only source of real joy and blessedness.

“As for myself, I am very busy with my studies, for that is work for the Lord, because it is training the mind that he has given me for service in his blessed Church; for that is my calling, dear Mary. I have no higher aim than to preach the glad tidings of salvation to a perishing world.

“I hope that you often go to see my parents; for I know that they miss Percy. They love you, Mary, not only for your own sake, but because you are my precious friend.

“I find work at college, for there are scores of immortal beings here who need a word of counsel.

“They are my brothers, Mary, and I am able to drop many a loving word among them for my Master.”

This is the general tenor of Percy's letters; and this sweet spirit of deep piety must be a great help to our Morning Glory. I am truly glad that she has such a correspondent.

She has a warm friend, too, in Sarah Bronson, who was received last Sunday into the communion of the Church.

She is a valuable friend to Mary; for her practical good sense is so strengthening to one so tender as our dear Morning Glory.

They spend much time together, and are following Percy's hints in studying the Gospels of our dear Lord.

They are both anxious to be employed in the serv-

ice of their Master, and often talk to me about their earnest desires.

The other day they walked out together in the neighborhood of the factory, and Mary came to me, when they returned, brimful of new thoughts.

"I think we have found work," she said; "for we saw so many ragged, dirty children on the banks of the creek, some making mud pies, some wading in the creek, some squabbling and using such bad language, that I said to Sarah:

"I guess there's work for us here; but how shall we go about it?"

"We talked it over, and, acting upon some of Sarah's hints, we joined some of the little groups, and asked if any went to Sunday-school.

"We found that none of them could read, for there was no school near.

"When I spoke to them of Jesus, they looked so blank, as if they had seldom, or perhaps never, heard of that blessed gift of a Savior for lost sinners.

"We asked if they would like to come to Sunday-school, for we were ready to teach them the way to heaven.

"Some few answered favorably; but we found that they were very destitute of proper clothing.

"And now, mamma," Mary asked, at the close of her story, "can't we alter some of our clothes for them? Sarah will help; and we will each of us take our class to the Sunday-school."

I encouraged the idea, and told them to bring the

children to Shadyside, and then we would see what could be done.

Accordingly, next day the girls brought six little ragged children for us to fit out for Sunday-school.

Sarah brought some of her cast-off clothing, and we had also quite a goodly pile of garments that could be transformed.

When they found that they were to have nice dresses and sacques, with hats and shoes, too, they were in a state of great excitement; and I have no doubt that the number will be much increased by this prospect.

We went to work in earnest; and even Madge helped, too, for she is old enough now to learn to be useful.

The children came again on the following day to be fitted, and with them three more; so we found that we had quite a heavy task to accomplish. But Sarah was a great help, so ingenious and industrious. It was truly a cheerful bee that was gathered in our library, and our Morning Glory said, with such a bright, happy face:

“This is nice work, dear mamma. Think how happy it will make so many; and won't Percy be glad when he hears what we are doing?”

In three more days the children were rigged in their new suits, and were n't they a proud little company?

When the last touch was given, they dropped a homely courtesy, with many thanks, and promised to

come on Sunday morning, when Mary would take them to the Sunday-school.

True to their promise, they presented themselves, and we each had a class of six to introduce to the superintendent.

Doctor Crofton was delighted, and said that "he wished others would take the hint from this example, and thus many classes might be formed, and so much good done."

Then he spoke to the new-comers with words of hearty welcome, telling them what was expected of them.

The two girls are just as happy as young hearts can be; and I pray that God would bless our Morning Glory's work.

Her heart was now full of plans for the factory children, and one day she said:

"It is such a pity that so many can't read, mamma, for it would be a tedious task in the short morning session. Could n't we have a night-school, to meet twice a week?"

"We'll think about it, dear," I answered, for it seemed quite possible.

Consulting Edward, we invited these two classes to our own school-room at home; but it soon grew beyond that, and Doctor Crofton allowed us the use of the Bible-class room, where they were taught to read, spell, write; also the simple rules of arithmetic, and a passage of Scripture at each meeting.

We were obliged to call in the aid of the boys, and Harold, Fred, and Wilbur took classes.

We had some trouble, at first, with these undisciplined children; but kindness and patience work wonders among young folks, and little rewards, in the shape of pretty cards for the diligent, helped on the work.

“See, mamma,” said our Morning Glory, “we have found our work, and it started from a company of little folks making mud pies and wading in the creek.”

Chapter XIX.

FRED'S AMBITION.

E have watched Fred's cornfield with great interest, for he is such a noble, manly boy that nothing would please me more than to find that he is likely to succeed.

He tells us now and then how his fund is growing, and often says, "I am very hopeful and am confident that I shall obtain my desire."

It really seems so, for last evening Mr. Bronson came over the stile with good news.

"Fred is getting on bravely," said the proud father; "almost enough to carry him through the first year. He deserves to succeed, for I have never heard him utter one word of complaint about hard work, and last Winter he gave up his new suit that he might add the money to the fund, and he is so cheerful and industrious, such a good boy, that I do believe that God will bless our son."

Edward asked what was needed to make up the amount, and generously offered to supply the deficiency, for he said:

"I know that I am not only aiding a deserving boy, but I am helping to give the world a noble worker."

Next day Fred came over to return his thanks, and grasping Edward's hand in a warm clasp he said, with moistened eyes :

"You shall never regret your generous help, my friend, for I am full of energy and strong hope, and, with God's blessing, I trust that I shall be a faithful servant of the Lord, who has touched your heart, for it all comes from our Father, Mr. Cuthbert."

Edward saw, too, that Fred's clothes were very shabby, and said that such a spirit should not be subjected to mortification among his school-mates, and therefore handed a check to Mr. Bronson, directing him to use it all for Fred's outfit.

When he appeared among us in his neat suit he really looked every inch a gentleman, saying so gratefully :

"It would have been a trial to be slighted for shabby clothes, but I could have stood it, Mr. Cuthbert, when I remembered what I was about."

Fred is a handsome lad, and when he uttered these few strong words with such a flash of honest pride, I honored the manly boy, and, clasping his hand, I said :

"I must have something to do with this good work, Fred."

Then I handed him a box of handkerchiefs, neck-ties, and collars, for Edward had already supplied the gloves.

"What have I done to deserve all this?" he asked.

"You have done many neighborly acts, Fred, as

your flower-bed and vegetable patch can testify," Edward replied, "and this is my acknowledgment."

"May God bless you, my dear, kind friend!" was his grateful answer.

Wilbur is so lonely without his brother, and we think that he is old enough to join him, so it is quite decided that he is to enter in the Fall term.

But what shall we do without our two bright boys? they are such a comfort.

I feel that I can trust Wilbur among the new trials of school life, for I believe that he is a true child of God, and under the guidance of our Heavenly Father will be led on in the narrow way.

He, too, has been numbered with the people of God; and thus I count three crown jewels safe in the Savior's loving care—darling Flo, quite out of the reach of sin and sorrow; our Morning Glory and dear Wilbur under the care of the Good Shepherd, and sheltered by his love, guided by his Spirit, I trust will overcome at last.

But Harold stands aloof yet, his intellectual pride the great barrier between his soul and the blessed Savior, for he often says:

"What lack I yet? Do n't I try to fulfill all my duties as son, brother, friend, pupil, and what lack I yet?"

I reply:

"The love of God, as the ruling motive of every action."

May the Holy Spirit show him his great need! I

commit him daily to his guidance, and doubt not that Harold will be brought into the fold at last.

Madge is much more thoughtful; Allan, too, is overcoming his natural love of ease,—and Miss Spencer cheers my heart by telling me how much they have improved since dear Flo's departure.

Madge came the other evening, to have a long talk with me before retiring, and told me, in an artless way, with such a serious face, that Allan and she had made up their minds to become Christians.

I told the dear child that making up the mind was not all; for that it was the Holy Spirit alone that could give the new heart, without which we can not please God.

Then we knelt together, and I poured out a heart-warm prayer for dear, frolicsome Madge and her brother.

The Summer has passed away, the leaves are fading; and this warns us that in a very few days we must part with our dear boys.

Wilbur has been very cheerful in the prospect; but as the day draws nigh I see the shadows clouding the dear boy's face, for his is a loving nature.

I often see Mary and him walking under the shade of our trees, both so serious, and I know that she is giving him some gentle hints about life at school.

She has given him a pretty case for his themes, and a little needle-book for accidents that may happen to buttons, saying:

"Think of sister, dear Wilbur, when you use them."

"Do I ever forget our Morning Glory?" he answered, with such a beaming face.

It is Monday morning, and the three boys are bidding farewell for a season.

"Only a few days," said Harold, "and we shall be here again."

I watch my crown jewels, as they pass down the avenue, with a mother's heart of love, and send up a fervent prayer that God will protect and guide and bless my children; and I know that he will, for he is a faithful God, that hears and answers prayer when offered in his Son's name.

But when I entered our sitting-room, and saw their empty chairs, Harold's sketches on the wall, and Wilbur's favorite books, I said, with a sigh:

"How we shall miss them!"

In a few days we received Harold's diary, so full of Wilbur's advent at the institute.

Thus he writes:

"We received a warm welcome from the professor; but Wilbur is so shy and timid, I felt sorry for him. The professor saw it, too; and while he shook hands cordially with Fred, he threw his arm around Wilbur's waist, and I heard him say:

" 'You'll find a kind mother here, my boy.'

"The boys looked at the new-comers somewhat

curiously, and I saw Jack Douglass whisper something to Gilbert which brought a sneer upon his face; no doubt hints about the work on the farm.

"In the evening Mrs. Lennox called Wilbur to her side, and said:

" 'We don't have any lonesome boys here, my son. Just be a good, diligent boy, and you'll be as happy as the day is long; is n't that so, Harold?'

" 'I can truly answer, Yes, indeed,' I replied; 'for this room is always such a sweet shelter, just like home, and our little Rose such a sunbeam.'

"Then she brought out a basket of red apples, and I saw that Wilbur was quite at home.

"But when we covered up in bed I heard Wilbur sigh, and then I knew that his heart was turning to Shadyside and its dear inmates.

"In school next day the professor gave him plenty to do, and said:

" 'You have been highly favored, boys, for some one has laid a solid foundation upon which to build.'

"I knew who had done this good work for us, and I gave a heart-warm testimony to Miss Spencer's faithfulness.

"The professor is charmed with Fred Bronson and said to me:

" 'There is the making of a brilliant man in that boy, Harold.'

" 'Yes,' I answered, 'and a good one, too.'

"And then I told a little of Fred's history, and how bravely he had worked.

“ ‘He is only treading in the path of many of our great men, Harold. If you read their history you will see that early struggles perfect character. Witness the sturdy oak in its battle with the elements.’ ”

“I am so glad to see how rapidly Fred is stepping forward, not only for his own sake, but it is such a mortifying reproof to Jack Douglass, who I know tries to humble Fred among the boys. Gilbert, too, is envious of the popularity of the newcomer, but, although Fred sees it all, and knows just where to lay the blame, he quietly pursues his way and only says:

“ ‘I have no time to attend to such boys as these two; let them enjoy themselves; they can't hurt me.’ ”

“Then he told me how the professor had encouraged him by the history of his own early struggles, for he, too, had started in life from very humble beginnings.

“I am sorry to say that Mifflin is declining very fast, and will leave us to-morrow. I shall miss him, dear mamma, for he has been a faithful friend to me, and his bright example has taught me many a useful lesson.

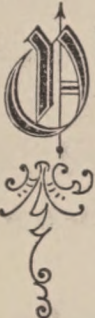
“I have bidden farewell to my dear friend, and the night before he spoke so sweetly of his faith in Christ that I thought what a blessed hope the Christian's is.

“He gave me a little book on spiritual piety, writing his dear name on the fly-leaf.

“Don’t get discouraged, dear mamma; I can truly say thus much, I do most earnestly desire to be a true Christian, and you may be very sure that I shall never make a hasty profession.”

Chapter XX.

WILBUR'S DIARY.

“F course, dear mamma, you will want to know something of my impressions in this new world.

“You know how shy I am, and I own that I felt most painfully the trial of being among strangers; but this wise, good professor soon put me at rest, for he understood the timid boy, and when he threw his arm around me, and whispered a few kind words, I felt that I had a warm, true friend in this wise guardian. And when he sees me looking lonely, in passing, he often touches me on the back, and thus I know that he does n't forget me. Is n't that almost like a baby? What a teacher he is! making every thing so clear. I think it a great privilege to be one of his pupils.

“My place assigned in my classes, I had plenty of work, the very best thing for a boy that was a little homesick.

“Fred Bronson made a most happy impression in school, especially with the professor, and I saw that Jack Douglas was not going to bear that quietly; for did n't he remember the story about carrying slop to the pigs?

“I was pretty sure that he would make use of

that old story; for when Fred was first introduced I saw Jack whisper in Gilbert's ear, which was answered by a sneer.

"But I have something to show you how mean an envious nature can be.

"There was a prize offered for the best English composition, and I was pretty sure that Fred would obtain it, for there is not a boy here who can excel him.

"The day arrived, and when Fred handed his theme to the professor I saw his countenance change, for it was shamefully blotted.

"How could you hand me such a production, Fred?" he asked, with much displeasure.

"It is none of my doing," he replied, "for when it was finished, and folded up, it was perfectly clean; but on taking it out of my desk, to my surprise, I saw that it was ruined. It could not have been an accident, for our inkstands are sunken in our desks, and covered. It was the work of some hand, Professor Lennox."

"As he glanced around the room, two boys looked as if they could tell something if they would.

"I pity the boy who could do such an act," said the professor; "but it will come to light—mark my words."

"The prize was awarded to Harold; and the professor told Fred to leave the article with him, as he had not done with it yet.

"You will be glad to hear that Harold stands high

in all his classes; but he is not very popular, for he never joins in any of the sly performances of school-boys.

"There is a literary society connected with the institute, and they are about to celebrate the first anniversary of its formation, offering a prize for composition.

"The professor has told Fred to copy his theme and offer it; 'for it would give me the greatest pleasure to see malice defeated,' he said.

"After school we three boys talked over the affair, and I asked:

" 'Have you any suspicions, Fred?'

" 'I think so,' he replied; 'a little more than suspicions.' And then he told what he had seen:

" 'Passing through the hall, the afternoon before, I heard a noise in the school-room, and, as the door was ajar, I looked in, and there I saw Gilbert busy at my desk.

" 'I said, angrily, 'What are you about there, boy? You have no right to meddle with my desk.'

" 'With great confusion, he replied:

" ' "I have lost my algebra, and thought that perhaps it might have got among your books."

" 'He looked very guilty; but I said no more.'

" 'Are you going to let him off, Fred?' asked Harold. 'That mean boy ought to be exposed.'

" 'I shall not do it, for I despise fusses,' was his reply.

"But I knew that Harold would n't allow the boy to escape so easily.

“Accordingly, he made known the facts to the professor, who sifted the matter, and had no doubt that Gilbert was the guilty one.

“I really pitied the boy when the professor exposed him before the whole school, and suspended him from the school-room for one week, his lessons being heard after school was dismissed.

“You may be sure that he was shunned by the boys after that meanness; for when at the close of the week he returned to the school-room, no one noticed him but Jack Douglass.

“Fred copied his theme beautifully, and, offering it to the society, it was read by the professor himself, and, amid hearty applause, took the prize.

“The two boys were chap-fallen, indeed; for the one whom they had thought to humble was exalted, and the guilty one abased.

“We have good times, mamma; for we have a fine play-ground, where the professor often joins us—the biggest and merriest boy of all. And sometimes he comes among us in the sitting-room, after study hours.

“But Gilbert stands aloof from us all, he is so deeply mortified.

“Last evening we met there as usual; but Gilbert was alone in the school-room, for when Jack Douglass is absent he has no companion.

“Does n’t sin bring its punishment, even here, mamma?

“Fred Bronson is such a generous, noble hearted

fellow; for he could n't bear to see one so cast aside, and he said:

“ ‘I'm going after Gilbert, boys. I think that he has been punished enough; and I remember, too, that he is an orphan.’

“ ‘Are you really going to be such a soft-hearted Miss Molly?’ said one of the boys.

“ ‘I am just going to do what I would like done to me,’ he replied; ‘and I am not afraid of being laughed at, either, while I am trying in a very humble way to follow my Master.’

“ ‘No one can ever look upon Fred Bronson as a Miss Molly while he tries to follow the most manly of all human examples. Was n't our dear Lord a noble specimen of true manliness?

“ ‘Harold went with him, and told about the interview when we were alone.

“ ‘He said that Gilbert was sitting by himself, looking so disconsolate, and comforting himself with candies and cakes.

“ ‘Fred went directly up to him, with the frank, manly words:

“ ‘I can't stand this any longer, Gilbert, and I've come to take you to the sitting-room.’

“ ‘Not till I ask your pardon, Fred,’ he replied; ‘for I know that you did not want to expose me, and I know, too, that I did a mean act. But Jack Douglass set me on, and I am heartily ashamed of it.’

“ ‘It's all forgiven, Gilbert,’ was Fred's reply. ‘And now, if you want to retrace your steps and be a

good man, cut loose from all bad companions, and join those who will help you.'

"When they entered the sitting-room there was a lull in the conversation, a shy look on the faces of the boys, and a deeply mortified and sorrowful look on Gilbert's, and so he sat apart from the rest; but Fred kindly looked after him.

"We sang some of the professor's college songs, which we boys enjoy heartily, and then played games, and guessed conundrums, some of us attempting to make some of our own.

"At the close we sang Fred's favorite song, composed for the Centennial:

"Roll the drum, loud blow the trumpet,
Throughout the earth proclaim it,
Proud Liberty has found a home,
America we name it.
'Tis true we are but children yet,
New wine we have been drinking,
Pressed from the juice of Freedom's grapes,
Not the best wine for thinking.

Chorus—Blow the trumpet, Jonathan,
Let the nations hear it;
Blow the trumpet, Jonathan,
Let the nations cheer it.

Blow the trumpet; come, ye nations,
It is our glorious birthday;
Step in the car of Liberty,
Speeding across earth's pathway.
No blood-red hands shall hold the reins,
Blest Peace shall raise the banner;

When righteousness shall fill the land,
We 'll shout aloud, Hosanna!
Blow the trumpet, etc.

They say we Yankees like to boast;
I guess 't is pretty true, sir;
Singing our Cock-a-doodle-doo,
When strangers pass this way, sir.
But we are only children yet,
And boys are full of capers;
And that may be the reason why
We brag so much in papers.
Blow the trumpet, etc.

We've often heard, I guess 't is true,
All nations have their crankies;
"Put on the steam and go ahead!"
That is the way with Yankees.
Full many somersaults we've had,
Throughout our boyish season;
We may have more, ere comes the dawn
Of sober, second reason.
Blow the trumpet, etc.

Good Father Bull is here to-day,
He shall be warmly greeted;
Just side by side with Yankee John
We're glad to see him seated.
We have no room for little thoughts
In this our Western free land,
But sing, with hearty, right good will,
God bless the queen of England!
Blow the trumpet, etc.

Louis Crapeau is with us, too,
Uncrowned he sits among us,
The bauble gone; but jealous eyes,
Keen as the sight of Argus,

Are watching o'er that hidden toy,
Until, amid the shaking
Of red-hot partisans, they see
The day for kings awaking.
Blow the trumpet, etc.

The Russian Bear, with friendly paw,
Extends his kindly greeting;
And nations from the distant East
In right good will are meeting,
All pointing to the blessed day,
When, in the coming glory,
Slaughter and strife shall pass away,
And *war* be but a story.
Blow the trumpet, etc.'

"It was received with hearty cheers, for the boys were in a patriotic mood.

"After Fred's noble conduct, I don't think that Gilbert will ever join a clique against any boy, or lend himself to such meanness.

"After he had left the room, Fred proposed that they should all try to forget Gilbert's conduct, and, as he seemed truly penitent, extend a brother's helping hand.

"Three cheers for Fred Bronson!" they called out, and thus he triumphed."

Chapter XXI.

OUR BOY'S EXPERIMENT.

Harold's Diary.

“ELL, mamma, you see I am a teacher, and this is how it came about:

“One of the teachers is sick, and the professor asked me to take charge of his class during his absence.

“It was so unexpected that it quite took me by surprise, but as they were the youngest boys, and I would do any thing to oblige the professor, I consented.

“They are a lively set of little fellows, and when I took my seat before them I saw that some of them meant fun. I put on no airs of dignity, but just met them as an older boy sent to take care of them.

“I remember the professor's ways, for they had been my study for a long time. He is always so natural, and that is what I admire in our grand Professor Lennox.

“He studies *boys* more than *books*, and that is the reason of his success.

“Our first lesson was one of English history, but I soon saw that if Dobson remained in the class there

would be no order, for I knew that he was the ring-leader.

“I reproved him once, not sharply, but the second time that he transgressed, I said quietly, but firmly, ‘You can take your book, Dobson, and study by yourself.’

“I did n’t scold, mamma, for the professor never does that.

“Dobson looked rather sheepish, but he left the class, and we had some comfort.

“The boys were much interested in the lesson, for it is my favorite branch, and when they had finished their recitations I related some amusing incidents connected with the history of England in its early days.

“I saw that Dobson looked upon us quite wishfully when he saw how eagerly the boys listened, and after a short time he came quite humbly, asking permission to return.

“‘I shall be glad to have you among us, Dobson,’ I replied, ‘but you must behave like a gentleman or you can’t stay here; we have no time to play; that belongs to recess.’

“I saw that the boy was quite cowed, and we had a pleasant morning.

“Twice the professor passed by our class, and once he said, in a low tone :

“‘You are doing admirably, Cuthbert, and have managed that boy just right.’

“‘I saw that he wanted to be noticed,’ I replied, ‘and so I put him aside.’

“ ‘That’s just so,’ he answered; ‘boys are very apt to consider themselves of some consequence, even if they raise a fuss; but to be quietly set aside brings them to their senses.’

“At recess I joined in the sports, and Dobson was delighted when he beat me at base-ball.

“After recess we attended to mathematics—you know that I don’t care much for that study, but I never allow myself to take a low place, even if I don’t like it. The professor says that it is a good mental discipline, and I know it is, curbing the flights of fancy.

“When the class was dismissed some of the boys came and said:

“ ‘You’ll come to-morrow, Cuthbert; Professor Jones is such a dry stick, just keeping close to the text-book and never a word beyond.’

“Perhaps you remember little Nat Thurston, who was such a discouraging boy; but the professor struck the spark in him, and now he is quite a respectable scholar. He was always a good boy, and I thought that there was nothing in him, but the professor knew better.

“I do hope that he will manage to make something out of Gilbert, although he is still more discouraging than ever Nat Thurston was.

“Fred’s noble conduct has had a most happy effect upon him. He is very cool to Jack Douglass, has given up his candies, and under Fred’s guidance is trying to do better.

“Last evening a letter came announcing the departure of Henry Mifflin. He died so peacefully, resting only upon Jesus, so patient and submissive, for he had much to live for—a devoted mother, two lovely sisters, and every thing that wealth could give; but he was more than willing to depart and be with Jesus.

“I remember our last conversation on the night before he left school.

“I could not understand why he should be so deeply conscious of so many transgressions, for I have never seen any thing in Mifflin but a lovely Christian character.

“When I expressed surprise he said so humbly:

“‘The outward life may all appear right to man, Harold, but it is to the heart that God looks, and that is the seat of many sins. When I see mine, I can truly say, Christ is all and in all; he is my only hope.’

“Then the professor puzzles me, too, for he also laments the sinfulness of his heart, and yet I see in his life the most beautiful of Christian traits.

“He congratulated me warmly on my success with the boys, saying:

“‘You are a born teacher, Cuthbert.’

“‘I fear that such a choice would disappoint my father,’ I replied, ‘for I think that he expects me to be his future partner in business.’

“‘He is a sensible man,’ was his reply, ‘and will not cross your inclinations. I have seen some sad

results of such a course of parental authority. If I could only see you a true, heart-changed Christian, I should have such bright hopes of your usefulness.'

" 'It is my great desire to lead an upright and useful life,' I answered; 'what else do I need?'

" 'I will reply to you in the words of our dear Lord to the young man in the Gospel, when speaking of himself just as you do,' the professor said, "one thing thou lackest."'

" 'What is that one thing, professor?' I asked.

" 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.'

" I could not reply in the affirmative to that, and when I hear such a man as Professor Lennox confessing his sinfulness in the sight of a holy God I begin to think that I have a great lesson to learn yet.

" Wilbur is doing splendidly; his example so very sweet among the boys—so influential, and yet so modest, especially interested in Nat Thurston, who clings to him as his best friend. He is quite a pet with Mrs. Lennox, and you may be sure that he reciprocates her kindness.

" At the close of a week Professor Jones returned, and I was sorry to see that he was not very warmly greeted, and really I do not wonder, for he is so starched. But I was pleased when he praised the boys' progress during his absence.

" We often talk about the future, and the professor says:

“ ‘Harold will be our professor, Wilbur our minister,’ and, I added, ‘Allan our merchant;’ don’t you think so, dear mamma?

This was such a pleasant message from our dear boy, and I begin to see that Providence points that way.

Mike Sullivan holds on his ways, and often drops in to see us.

The other day we were standing on the piazza, when Madge called out, “Look at Mike! What is he doing?”

There he was, sure enough, plodding up the avenue, rolling a large pumpkin, and carrying a basket on his arm.

Placing it on the piazza, he bobbed a bow to Mrs. Cuthbert, saying:

“I have brought you my first pumpkin and three fresh squashes, all my own raising; you’re so good to my mother, that I said: ‘Mrs. Cuthbert shall have the first; and I’m going to take the second to Fred Bronson, for he’s my best friend.’”

I thanked him for the gift, and told him that he should have one of the pumpkin pies, adding, “I’m glad to hear such a good account of you, Mike, in helping your mother.”

Then I told him to take them round to the kitchen, and saw that Jane gave him a good breakfast and filled his basket with groceries.

He is a great comfort to his mother now, taking

care of the garden-patch, affording them quite a help in providing for the family.

Edward's Bible class is flourishing, and its blessed effects are seen in the lives of many of its members.

God be praised for all his goodness if "the Church in our house" has brought salvation to any of the wanderers.

Chapter XXII.

OUR MORNING GLORY'S BIRTHDAY.

 SEVENTEEN yesterday, when we celebrated our Morning Glory's birthday, inviting only our connections and a few intimate friends.

The boys had dressed the parlor for the occasion, hanging a wreath of lovely flowers over the door leading to the library, with the words, "Our Morning Glory," in shining gilt letters.

Dressed in a French muslin, tastily made, with a few rose-buds in her beautiful hair, and a bunch in the bosom of her dress, I must be excused for writing that our darling looked lovely, her sweet modesty her chief attraction.

It was a bright day, and the guests began to come in the morning, as some were from the city.

Her gifts were beautiful, Edward presenting a parlor organ. Mary has a fine voice, and decided musical talent; therefore, her father wishes her to cultivate these gifts.

Mrs. Travers, Edward's sister, and her daughter, Louise, had just returned from Europe, where they had been spending two years, the mother putting the finishing polish to her young daughter's education, as she thought.

Dressed in the height of Parisian fashions, I saw that Mary looked bewildered upon the young girl, when she rattled on about balls, operas, admirers, dress, and fashion; for Mary remembered that both Louise and her mother were professing Christians.

Mrs. Travers presented Mary with a pretty box of Paris gloves; Uncle John Kingston, a Geneva watch; Sister Sophy, a handsome brooch for her hair; Harold, a neat little writing-desk; Wilbur, a likeness of Harold and himself; mamma, a box of fine handkerchiefs; Allan, a portfolio, and Madge a likeness of Lilly and myself; Sarah Bronson, a pretty work-basket; and Fred, a gold pencil.

Living out of town, fortunately we had no acquaintances among fashionable people—only Mrs. Carter, one of our neighbors, with whom we exchanged calls of ceremony; therefore, the extreme frivolity of her young cousin bewildered our innocent Morning Glory.

Finding that Mary listened in silence, Louise addressed her conversation to her personally.

“Have you never been to the opera?” she asked.

Mary replied, innocently:

“Mamma never goes; and, of course, I should not wish to go anywhere that she disapproved of.”

“Are you not fond of music?” she asked.

“It is my chief pleasure,” Mary replied; “and I am very fond of some of the airs from operas. I think that they are charming.”

“What harm does Aunt Julia see in the opera?”

"She thinks that the sentiments often sung by the performers are very shocking, and the worldliness encouraged by attendance upon such amusements very unfriendly to real piety."

"Nonsense!" she said, with a toss of her pretty head. "I heard a very pious lady say once that she could pray as well at the opera as at church."

Mary opened her blue eyes wide, as she replied:

"Is that really so?"

Louise burst out laughing, as she said:

"What an innocent lamb it is! I suppose that you never go to balls, either?"

"No, Louise; I have never been to dancing-school, and I think that nothing could tempt me to join in the waltzing."

"Why, what harm is there in waltzing?"

"I do not think that it is delicate for a young lady to allow herself to be so familiarly held by a gentleman. Besides all this, I am a member of the Church, Louise."

"What kind of a life do you lead, Mary?" she asked.

"A very happy one, I can assure you, for I have no pleasure in such amusements. Doctor Crofton says that we should go nowhere, nor join in any recreations, where we could not expect to meet our Savior, and where we could not ask God's blessing to go with us."

"Too humdrum for me," was the answer; "I could never stand such a life as that. If you could

only go to dear, delightful Paris, you would soon be cured of all that nonsense."

"I hope, then, that I shall never go."

"Poor little lamb," she said, "how I pity you!"

We were agreeably surprised by Percy's arrival, for, although he knew of the birthday, we did not suppose that he would leave in the midst of the term.

He congratulated Mary, with warm wishes for her happiness, as he handed her a music-box playing six tunes.

Percy looked pale and careworn—I suppose from close application; and I asked him if he was not well, to which he replied:

"Rather overworked, I believe, and I feel the need of a few days' rest."

"We are so glad to have you with us," I said.

Mary and Percy were soon seated on the lounge, quite engrossed with each other, and I saw by their animated faces that they were very happy.

"Who is that youth?" asked Mrs. Travers.

"Our minister's son, Percy Crofton."

"A very attractive young man," she replied.

"And a most excellent one," I answered. "There are very few like Percy Crofton."

"He seems quite devoted to Mary," she continued.

"They have been intimate all their lives," I answered.

"But these are not childish days," she hinted, with a meaning smile.

"I have no objection to the intimacy," was my

reply; "for intercourse with such a character must be useful to any one."

"Of course, he is one of the very pious ones," she said, with a slight sneer.

"He is a true, whole-hearted Christian, Ellen," was my answer, "but not of a kind that the world admires."

Percy was delighted with the organ, for he was a fine performer on the instrument, and was pleased to find that Mary was to take lessons.

Invited to favor us with some music, he took his seat at the instrument, and, accompanying it with his voice, we had some charming sacred music, Mary joining with her lovely voice.

"It is a fine instrument," he said; and addressing Mary, he added, "We shall enjoy this at vacation, won't we, Mary? But now we must have some of your airs on the piano."

She was not one who needed coaxing, but very cheerfully played in a fine style some of Mendelssohn's finest pieces.

When Louise was asked to favor us she complained of being out of practice; but receiving her apologies, we were entertained by some of her fashionable performance. She really had a fine voice, and if she had not been so affected would have been a pleasing performer; but there were certain airs in her mode of sitting at the piano, and a lifting of her hands rather frantically, that spoiled all.

Sarah Bronson was one of our most attractive

guests; for though not a beauty, she was so natural, such a picture of perfect health and bright intelligence, that, dressed in a simple muslin that became her graceful figure, she was admired by every one.

When we were called out to the supper-table, Harold escorted Sarah, and Percy our Morning Glory.

I had observed lately that Harold seemed drawn to this intelligent girl, whose practical good sense was often a check upon his enthusiasm, and I know that such a friend is of great value to our high-strung young gentleman.

I could not be mistaken in my estimate of the admiring glances which Percy bent upon our Morning Glory. And why should he not admire our darling girl?

Mary, too, thought that there was no one in her world to be compared to Percy Crofton, and the attachment seemed to be growing so naturally that I just left all in the hands of our Heavenly Father, who, I trust, is leading us all,

But Percy's delicate look haunts me, for I fear that there is something of a serious character lurking there.

He had only come for two days, but his parents persuaded him to stay longer, and he acknowledged that the rest was very necessary.

In our private intercourse, I was much struck by the marks of spiritual growth so visible in Percy, who seemed to be panting after holiness, longing for that "perfect love which casteth out fear."

Mary, too, often spoke of the heavenly mind so apparent in all his conversation; for although it was not always about spiritual things, yet every subject which he touched seemed tinged with the holy atmosphere in which he lived, and it might be said of him, truly, that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

He often spoke of the living power of the Savior's life, and said that he believed the prayerful study of the Gospels was a great means of grace to one seeking for holiness; for continually looking unto Jesus, we become like him. No doubt it is so; for if close communion with human friends begets likeness, how much more, under the guidance of the Spirit, does such communion draw the same lineaments on the disciple who studies the Master closely?

He stayed with us a week, and we were truly sorry to say farewell; but he reminded us that vacation would soon be here, and then he would be with us a long time, for he expected to graduate.

Ellen wishes Mary to return with her, and I am making some preparation. She really does not care to go very much; but I think that she ought to accept the invitation, for Edward's sake.

I know that our Morning Glory was about to enter upon new scenes, and when we were alone I dropped a few motherly hints.

"You will be in a worldly atmosphere, my dear child, and will need heavenly wisdom to walk humbly and consistently.

"If called upon to join in any amusements that your conscience condemns, be firm, my child; but be very careful not to parade your religion, or condemn unkindly those who differ from us.

"Study the thirteenth chapter of Corinthians, and take it for your guide. See how exactly it meets your case: 'Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil.'

"Pray that this sweet spirit may be formed in your heart, and bring forth fruit in your daily life; but never forget that you profess to be a Christian, a follower of the blessed Savior."

She thanked me sweetly, and said:

"I know that you will pray for me, dearest mamma."

"We shall polish up our Morning Glory," said Ellen; but I must say that I do n't very much admire her ideas of polish, but I can trust Mary.

After Percy's departure Mary seemed very silent, and Louise undertook to banter her.

"Disconsolate, Mary?" she asked. "I do n't wonder, for I admire your beau."

"Please do not apply such a pitiful title to one like Percy Crofton. Do not forget that he is to be a minister of the Lord Jesus, Louise; and that light name quite shocks me."

"Well, what do you call him, Mary?"

"A very dear friend, with whom I have played

and studied, and gone to the same Church and Sunday-school ever since we were children; and what makes our friendship more sacred is the fact that we joined the Church on the same day."

I was so pleased to hear such sensible remarks, so unlike young girls generally.

They are all gone, and we miss our Morning Glory; but at the close of a week a letter arrived from the dear girl, which I copy below:

"DEAREST MAMMA,—Aunt Ellen is very kind, and Louise tries to make my visit pleasant, but I find that what you told me is only too true.

"Visiting, shopping, living for pleasure, we are in a constant bustle; and that, you know, is not favorable to heart communion with God.

"For courtesy's sake, I feel under obligations to accept some invitations that come daily, but I have always been excused to dancing parties.

"Late hours, late breakfasts, lounging about all the morning,—it does seem like a very empty way of spending the few days of our mortal life, and I shall be so glad to return to the sweet domestic life at Shadyside.

"When Louise has evening company, I always do my part towards entertaining the guests by my very best performance on the piano, and I am glad when it pleases the company.

"The other day, Aunt Ellen took me out to get a

new hat, saying that mine was so old-fashioned. I let her choose the shape, but I could not consent to the flashy trimmings; but it is really a very pretty hat, and I know that you will like it.

“The Church that we attend is very fashionable, the music of the operatic style, and the ladies so over-dressed.

“What would I give for one of dear Doctor Crofton’s sermons, so full of Christ! but here it is all so different.

“But it has been a useful visit, showing me the vanity of fashionable life, and exalting my ideas of true spiritual piety.

“We never hear a word about holy things; no family prayer, no—. But I must stop, for fear that I am trespassing upon the sweet spirit of charity that you commended.

“I know, dear mamma, that I am far short of what I ought to be; and it ill becomes one so faulty herself to condemn others.

“Aunt Ellen often calls me a little Methodist, and says that it is such a pity that my mother has spoiled her daughter; but I shall always thank my Heavenly Father for having given me such dear parents.

“I have had a charming letter from Percy, so full of heavenly breathings, and yet so humble. I wish that I was like him, for I see that he is a reflected image of the dear Master. He is looking forward to vacation with so much pleasure; for he says that then we can see each other daily. Won’t that be delightful?

“I have had a letter from Harold, too, saying that Professor Lennox has been elected president of a flourishing college in New York State, but will not enter upon his duties until the Fall term. I can imagine what a grand president he will make.

“As Harold will graduate this term, he will not be a member of the college; but Fred has another year to finish his course, and Wilbur two.

“Harold will continue his studies at home, the course being marked out for him by the professor.

“I think that I see some reason for that; do n’t you, dear mamma?

“I should n’t be surprised to hear of our Harold filling one of the chairs there one of these days. He will never be any thing but a teacher—we are sure of that.

“With warmest love to all the dear ones, and a dozen kisses for darling Lilly, I am your loving daughter,
MARY.”

Chapter XXIII.

HAPPY DAYS.



MARY has been absent for several weeks, but we are expecting her return this afternoon, and Jane is going to welcome her with the nicest supper that her skill can prepare.

We are all on the tip-toe, for absence left a great blank.

Madge is gathering up her books to show sister how well she has done. Allan, too, has a good account, and Lilly is dancing about in the fullness of her joy, all on the lookout for the arrival of our Morning Glory.

"There she comes, Madge," cried Allan. "Let's go help her with her baggage."

Away they flew, Allan seizing her satchel, Madge a package wrapped in paper, and little Lilly trotting off to meet sister.

A sweet kissing time there was on the piazza, and I said:

"We're all so glad to see you, Mary, but you look tired, dear; now run up stairs and refresh yourself a little, for papa is coming home for an early supper."

It was a happy company that met at the supper-

table, where Jane had spread a dainty repast, and Madge had graced the table with a bunch of lovely flowers.

Of course, the young folks had many questions to ask, and in their excited state scarcely gave time for answers.

After supper Mary opened her bundle, and placing a pretty doll in a little wagon she drew it across the carpet, Lilly calling out:

“I know that’s mine, sister.”

“Yes, darling,” she replied; “now give me a sweet kiss, and then run off with your pet.”

She did not need a second bidding, and drawing her wagon she said:

“I name my baby Dolly.”

And off she ran with her treasure.

Then Mary brought out a beautiful book for Madge and a gold pencil for Allan.

Then I told the news. Our boys are coming in a few days, and Percy soon after, both Harold and he among the graduates.

Mrs. Crofton is fitting up a study for Percy, but he knows nothing about it.

“I think that I shall have something to do for that,” said our Morning Glory. “You know that I have been working a pair of slippers for him, which I have had made up, and in my leisure moments I have worked a motto with the words ‘Welcome Home,’ which I have had handsomely framed. I am so glad that they are finished.”

I showed her an afghan and a pillow which I had made for his lounge, and Madge, too, had made a pretty pen-wiper. When the room was entirely finished Mrs. Crofton sent for us to come over and see it.

We took our gifts with us, and could easily imagine Percy's surprise when he should see his beautiful study. Covered with a green carpet, with a pretty secretary, book-case, lounge, writing, and easy-chair, it was indeed a charming room for the young student. Over the secretary hung my motto, "Welcome Home," on the wall a neat little clock and the likeness of father and mother. On the back of his chair hung a gray wrapper made by Mrs. Crofton, and on the carpet by the lounge lay Mary's slippers; my afghan and pillow looked so restful and pretty spread out upon the lounge.

"Won't Percy be surprised?" asked Mary.

"He deserves it all," answered his mother, "for he is a precious son."

"It is a charming room," I said, "but Percy must not spend too much time here, Mrs. Crofton, for he is looking pale and careworn."

"That is just what we intend," was the answer; "he must have plenty of out-door exercise, and I mean to give him the care of my flower-garden and vegetable-patch; that will oblige him to spend the early hours of the day out of doors."

The boys are here, Harold having graduated with high honors. He has grown rapidly during the past

year, and is a noble looking youth; Wilbur his own dear self, but of a much more slender make than his brother.

All my crown jewels at home, and are we not a happy family,—all of us so much to tell, so many mercies to recount? Dear Wilbur had so much to tell of Harold's triumphs, saying with such a beaming face that "no one could compare with him excepting Fred," especially in the field of literature. He gave a sparkling account of Fred's splendid delivery of the valedictory, saying that "it was received with much applause."

He told an amusing story, too, of the way in which the boys sang the college songs at the close, but they had fine music provided by the professor. He was much surprised by the parting gift of the boys as a testimonial of their affection and respect.

There were three pieces—a silver pitcher and two goblets—marked with his name as their gift.

Harold made an eloquent speech on presenting the gift, and the professor responded in his own happy style, saying that he "hoped to see some of them at the college in the Autumn, and that he should always remember with warmest love the happy days at Courtland Institute."

When we were alone Harold gave a glowing account of Wilbur's course at school, saying that the boys called him "the little parson," not in ridicule by any means, although there were a few mean spirits who styled him "goody-goody."

Wilbur was not affected by these slurs, but just kept on his quiet, Christian way, "and you may be sure, mamma," Harold said, "that he really had the respect of all."

Then Harold showed me a handsome gold pencil with a seal at one end, saying, "That is Gilbert's gift," handing me at the same time a note, which I copy below:

"DEAR HAROLD,—I write these few parting lines to acknowledge all your kind forbearance towards me, notwithstanding so many provocations, for you and Fred made me heartily ashamed of my conduct. I didn't deserve two such friends.

"If you had pursued a revengeful course, as many boys would have done, it would have hardened me; but now I thank you for the many hints concerning my course in school, and can assure you that they are not forgotten and that I am trying to profit by them; but it is a hard task to break up bad habits. With grateful wishes for your health and happiness, I beg your acceptance of the pencil sent as a small testimonial of my respect and affection, hoping also that you will sometimes drop me a few lines of friendly counsel.

Yours truly,

"GILBERT."

These were my sweet accounts from my two dear boys, and I thanked God and took courage.

In the evening Harold hurried over to the Bron-

sons, for I know that his warm young heart is sending out its tendrils to one of the inmates.

Sarah is a decided Christian, and I rejoice to see that she tries to exercise a religious influence over our bright boy.

On the following day Percy arrived, our whole band now complete.

We were invited over to see his introduction to his study. We could scarcely say which feeling predominated—admiration or grateful love—but I think the latter, as he said :

“Take care, dear friends, that you don’t spoil me by this lavish goodness.”

Then he was told whose hands helped to furnish the lovely room.

Glancing with a smile at the lounge, he said :

“Isn’t that a temptation to be lazy?”

“By no means, Percy,” I replied; “it is only meant as a hint to seek needful rest when you are weary.”

“And these pretty slippers! I think I know whose little hands worked them,” he said, glancing at Mary.

Percy is so bright and happy, and our dear little Lilly seems to claim him as her chief play-fellow, for he is always ready to sing Mother Goose’s ditties for the child.

She, too, had learned parts of several, which she lisped so sweetly with her bird-like voice, which he generally rewarded with a bonbon.

After being at home a few days Percy had laid

down his plans for daily life. Early in the morning, out in the garden, he busied himself about the flowers and vegetables, then three hours study. After dinner walks of pleasure or usefulness, joined generally by our Morning Glory as his companion. I know that he needs this recreation, for he is by no means strong, and looks delicate yet.

Mary had engaged a teacher of music to come out twice a week, and Professor Leibert gave his first lessons yesterday to Mary on the organ, and to Madge on the piano.

Percy is a help to her, for, being a fine musician, his hints are very useful, and she practices with him. It is so pleasant to see how happy these young creatures are, for after dinner she, with her basket of flowers, and he with his vegetables and tracts, are off to Cowslip Lane, where a number of poor families belonging to the factory live, and these visits are so frequent that the little children have learned to look for them, and hail their coming with—

“Here comes the lady!”

Percy's flowers are flourishing, and he is always provided with some for the sick, or with vegetables for the needy.

Mrs. Weston and little Johnny Rawle are often cheered by these visits, and old Daniel Harper, who is bed-ridden, has learned to look for them every few days.

Mary often tells me how sweetly Percy speaks to them of the dear Savior, how his presence lights up

the sick-chamber, and how he sings the Gospel, never leaving without a few words of earnest prayer.

Sometimes I see them returning, hand in hand, skipping up the avenue with the light-heartedness of two children, Percy's dog, Fritz, gamboling around their feet, for he is never left behind.

Bright, happy days are these for the young dreamers, for it may well be seen that they are such. Mary sometimes drops a few words, revealing her bright thoughts almost unconsciously, for my child has no concealments from her mother.

Our Sundays are so happy, all our crown jewels at Church with us in the family pew, excepting Lilly, who is too young for such long restraint. We have some nice fruit and sponge-cake in the afternoon, spread upon our sitting-room table, and Percy often steps over to join our family circle, where we enjoy his heart-stirring music.

When I listen to his expressive hymns I do not wonder at the solemn effects produced by the sweet ministry of song.

Last Sunday he sang one of his favorites—

“I have a Savior, he's pleading in glory,

A dear, loving Savior, though earth-friends be few;

And now he is watching in tenderness o'er me,

And O that my Savior were your Savior too.

CHORUS.

For you I am praying,

For you I am praying,

For you I am praying,

I'm praying for you.

I have a father ; to me he has given
A hope for eternity, blessed and true ;
And soon will he call me to meet him in heaven,
But O that he 'd let me bring you with me too.

I have a robe ; 't is resplendent in whiteness,
Awaiting in glory my wondering view ;
O when I receive it, all shining in brightness,
Dear friend, could I see you receiving one too !

I have a peace ; it is calm as a river,
A peace that the friends of this world never knew ;
My Savior alone is its author and giver,
And O could I know it was given to you !"

When he sang, " For you I am praying," I knew who was on his heart, and I am sure that Harold felt it too, for when Percy closed the organ a silence had fallen upon all of us, and I saw Percy throw his arm around Harold as they passed out of the room, and I heard him sing in a low, sweet voice :

" For you I am praying."

They are warmly attached, and I am not afraid that Percy will be too pressing with our dear, proud boy.

Several times I have seen them walking together in earnest talk, and I pray that God would bless them both.

Last evening I had a long talk with dear Wilbur, and I find that what has heretofore seemed only a wish concerning his future is now a real consecration of himself to the service of his Master in the work of the ministry.

" I feel my own insufficiency," he said, " dear

mamma, "but I believe that the Lord has called me, and will be mouth and wisdom for his child."

We talked, too, about Harold, and Wilbur said that he believed his brother was often the subject of deep impressions, but it will be a hard task to give up all trust in human merit; still I believe that it will come at last, and when it does it will be a complete surrender."

Last evening we were all in the sitting-room talking about the future of our boys when Percy opened the organ and sang:

"O what are you going to do, brother?

Say, what are you going to do?

You have thought of some useful labor,

But what is the end in view?

You are fresh from the home of your boyhood,

And just in the bloom of youth.

Have you tasted the sparkling water

That flows from the fount of truth?

CHORUS.

Is your heart in the Savior's keeping?

Remember, he died for you.

Then, what are you going to do, brother?

Say, what are you going to do?"

When he had finished, he said feelingly:

"That's a question for all of us. Would n't it be a blessed thing if each of us would answer: 'I am going to serve the Master who died for me,'" and then he sang:

"Knocking, knocking, who is there?

Waiting, waiting, O how fair;

'Tis a pilgrim, strange and kingly,

Never such was seen before.
Ah! my soul, for such a wonder,
Wilt thou not undo the door?

Knocking, knocking, still he's there,
Waiting, waiting, wondrous fair;
But the door is hard to open
For the weeds and ivy-vine,
With their dark and clinging tendrils,
Ever round the hinges twine.

Knocking, knocking, what, still there?
Waiting, waiting, grand and fair.
Yes, the pierced hand still knocketh,
And beneath the crowned hair
Beam the patient eyes, so tender,
Of thy Savior waiting there."

It made a deep impression, and this is the way
that Percy sings the Gospel calls.

Chapter XXIV.

YOUNG DREAMERS.

ARY had gone over to see Percy's garden, for he was very proud of his success, and we all rejoiced in the healthy tints that were returning to his complexion.

On her way home, they stopped to rest awhile under the shade of the trees in the avenue, and I saw how earnestly the two were talking, quite oblivious of the one that was watching them, remembering her own young days when she looked at these dreamers.

They walked slowly to the house, and, as Mary had some household duties to attend to, Percy and I took our seats on the piazza; for it was one of the brightest of Summer days, when the sweet birds carolled their morning song among the fragrant vines that shaded the piazza.

"Do you know what a dreamer Mary has become?" he asked, and then he told a little of her misty pictures.

"She has a shadowy world of her own, in which she spends much time—a home somewhere, where she can help some one in the sweet and holy cares of a Christian life."

"She has that here, Percy, I think," was my reply. He colored a little, as he answered :

"A more tender companionship, I think, is among her visions. I have my dreams, too, of a church in a country parish, with a neat little parsonage, and our Morning Glory as its mistress. Can my dream be realized?" he asked, with an eager, wistful look.

"I have not one word to say against such a fulfillment of your dreams, Percy," I answered; "but you are both very young to think of any thing so serious."

"Not too young to love each other with a pure and holy affection," he answered. "We only want to know if Mary's parents approve of our wishes for the future."

Then we talked about it more particularly; but it was no news to me, for I had seen the attachment for some time.

When Mary joined us, I saw by her manner that she had divined the subject of our conversation; for, much confused, she was hurrying away to hide her blushes.

"Not so fast, Mary," he said. And then he told of what had passed between us; and I read in the glowing cheek and downcast eyes how happy she seemed in the hope of a sweet dream to be fulfilled some of these days.

Blessed, hopeful youth, that sees no shadows yet on the journey of life—nothing but the bright prospect of days spent together in the service of the dear Master whom they loved so truly.

After Percy had placed the ring of betrothal on Mary's finger, I said, "And so I bless my children," as I folded their hands together.

As Percy passed into the hall, there lay Fritz, close to the door of the room, which was open. I wonder if he heard, for he is a knowing dog.

Mary knew his weakness for loaf-sugar; and, handing him his lump, he bade good morning, and scampered after his master.

Ever after that day, Fritz made regularly his morning call after breakfast upon Mary, taking no notice of any one else. I wonder if it was a knowing respect for his master's intended, or love for the sugar-lump, that brought him over every morning.

Mary sometimes teased him a little, by tantalizing the poor fellow.

Seated upon his hind legs, he would beg so pitifully for the lump that Mary held for one moment in her hand, raising a warning finger, with the words, "Do n't touch," as she laid it on the carpet; and there it lay, undisturbed, until, wearied with waiting, his eyes watering, he would touch her lap with his paw. And when she said, "You may have it now, Fritz," it was most amusing to see how eagerly he snatched the lump.

Edward agreed with me perfectly; for he said that he knew of no one with whom he could trust our dear Morning Glory so cheerfully as Percy Crofton.

Next day, the parents came over to Shadyside to express their warm approval, for they dearly love our

Morning Glory; and so we feel our families united by a very sacred and tender bond.

It is, indeed, a holy tie which unites these two young hearts, devoted to the same Savior, having the same hopes of a blessed hereafter.

They are studying the Gospels together; for both are seeking for "that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord."

It is a pleasant picture in the library every afternoon; for when they return from their walks, with their Bible and Concordance, they sit there so engrossed with their heavenly study, whose fruits are seen in the reflection of the blessed image of their Master in their own young lives.

Percy's light shines in many ways. Indeed, how can it be otherwise, when there is an indwelling Christ in the heart?

The superintendent of the Sunday-school has been obliged to resign on account of failing health, and Percy was elected to fill his place—the very person to lead young hearts to Jesus; for that dear name is the beginning and ending of all his works of love.

I heard one of his addresses last Sunday. It was full of love and light, for it was full of truth.

With a glowing face and a fine voice, with such a fund of illustrations from which to draw his lessons, he is indeed a blessed teacher.

At the close of one of these addresses he said:

"People talk to you about being good children, and so you ought to be, but would you know how?

You must go directly to Jesus, the great healer of bodily diseases; for we read that multitudes followed him, and he had compassion upon them, and healed them all, never turning any away.

“Now, just so, dear children, you must go to him, to have your sins pardoned and your hearts made holy; for it is with the heart that we believe, it is the heart that he wants, it is your love he wants. For he loves you, every one of you; and do you suppose that he is less willing or able to cure the soul than to heal the body? for that is what he taught by his miracles.

“Then go to him, every day, every hour, and never rest until you are made the dear children of God.”

Then he told some sweet stories about holy men and women, who learned to love Him when they were children. “And that,” said he, in conclusion, “is what I want you to do now, this very day, with all your hearts.”

They listened with the deepest interest; and I have never heard an address to children so eloquent, so impressive, and yet so simple, so full of the love of Jesus, as that which fell from Percy Crofton's lips. May God bless the dear youth in his labors among the young!

Mary and Sarah Bronson are faithful teachers in the Sunday-school, their efforts blessed abundantly among the children.

Percy improves daily in health and spirits; and in his own humble, Christ-like way, his influence is felt

wherever his presence is seen, and his bright example is indeed a holy light to our Morning Glory.

She is dreaming still; and sometimes I steal in upon her retired hours, and find her busy with sundry little articles of taste, pretty mats and tidies, and those nameless adornments that we all like to see in our homes.

I know that she has made quite a goodly number, but I don't see them in her room; and I said, the other day:

“What in the world are you going to do with so many of these pretty things, Mary?”

She blushed at my question, and, smiling, replied:

“I am dreaming of the little parsonage, mainma, and I thought that I might as well make some ornaments for our home. I want it to be just as nice and pretty as ever I can make it.

“My sitting-room will be next to Percy's study; and I am making these tidies for the chairs, and the mats for the vases that will be scattered about.

“I am going to make some larger mats for the study, too, and some beautiful mottoes; and I know that Percy will be pleased with them, for he has fine taste.”

I could not help smiling at the young dreamer, who, no doubt, sees the pretty parsonage in her daily visions.

“Do you suppose that Percy would like to have you so close to his study?” I asked; “for with Morn-

ing Glory so near, I am afraid that one or the other might be coming in rather too often."

"O mamma," she said, "I wouldn't disturb him, on any account. I will just step in with a nice lunch at eleven o'clock. We will dine at one, and then we'll take a walk or a ride; for Percy will have a horse and carriage, I know. Won't it be blessed, mamma, to feel that we are both serving the same dear Master, and pressing on towards the same heavenly home?"

And so she dreams, as others have done before; but we must learn to leave our future all in the hands of the dear Heavenly Father, who knows, even now, whether our Morning Glory will ever dwell in such a sweet, peaceful home here below.

Edward has been very closely confined to business, and we are going to have a little recreation for his sake, taking an excursion up the creek to the falls, where there is good fishing, and a fish-house for visitors.

We shall take two boats, for the Croftons and the Bronsons will accompany us. Fritz, of course, goes too.

We had a charming day, all in fine spirits; for, bent upon making it a pleasant time, we all tried to consider each other's comfort.

It was about four miles distant, and our trip up the stream was lovely, for the scenery was attractive, the creek bordered on each side by drooping bushes that cast their shadows on the clear water.

We had some sweet music, too; for Percy started the little boat song, in which all the young folks joined:

“Row the boat, row the boat,
We are merry as we row;
Row the boat, row the boat,
Singing as we go.
Row the boat, row the boat,
None so happy now as we;
Row the boat, row the boat—
O for the bounding sea!”

It was a fine day for fishing; and the woman in charge of the fish-house cooked our mess for us, and with the basket packed by Jane, and the two brought by Mrs. Crofton and Mrs. Bronson, we had a very nice meal.

Wandering about among the hills, we scarcely knew how fast the time passed; but the setting sun warned us, at last, that it was time to return, singing, as we rowed homeward:

“Softly now the light of day
Fades upon my sight away;
Free from care, from labor free,
Lord, I would commune with thee.

Thou, whose all-pervading eye
Naught escapes, without, within,
Pardon each infirmity,
Open fault and secret sin.

Soon, for me, the light of day
Shall forever pass away;
Then, from sin and sorrow free,
Take me, Lord, to dwell with thee.”

Chapter XXV.

A GLIMPSE AT HAROLD'S FUTURE.

HAROLD is so depressed, not at all like his bright self, avoiding society, neglecting his studies, walking out by himself, spending his evenings generally in his own room.

If conversation takes a serious turn he leaves the room, especially when Percy plays his sweet hymns.

Last evening he sang several, but when he commenced—

“The Spirit in our hearts
Is whispering, Sinner, come,”

I saw that Harold was agitated, and at the second verse he was gone. He does not generally withhold his confidence from me, but, whatever is the trouble, he is silent now, and sometimes irritable.

I went over to Sarah Bronson to talk with her about the change, but she told me that he avoids conversation, adding:

“I think that it is a wounded spirit, for I believe that the Spirit of God is striving with Harold, and that he is passing through great conflicts; but we had better not force the subject; he will come to us when he is ready.”

And so Percy thinks, saying earnestly, "Let us pray for him, dear friend."

Doctor Crofton has been very earnest lately in his preaching; indeed, he is always faithful; but now he is more solemn, more personal.

Last Sunday he preached from the text, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee."

I saw that Harold was deeply affected, for he sat with a bowed head all the time, and once I thought that I saw a tear on his troubled face.

I was quite agreeably surprised to see him at the evening lecture, for he does not usually attend.

The doctor preached from the text, "Quench not the Spirit," a most solemn and impressive lecture, where he gave some touching incidents of cases in his own ministry. We sang the sweet hymn:

"Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,
With all thy quickening powers;
Kindle a flame of sacred love
In these cold hearts of ours.

See how we grovel here below,
Fond of those earthly toys;
Our souls, how heavily they go,
To reach eternal joys.

In vain we tune our lifeless songs,
In vain we strive to rise;
Hosannas languish on our tongues,
And our devotion dies.

Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,
With all thy quickening powers;
Come, shed abroad a Savior's love,
And that shall kindle ours."

I think the Spirit is working on Harold's heart; for, although we walked home together, not a word was spoken, and he went immediately to his room.

It was a beautiful moonlight last evening, and missing Harold from the parlor, I heard him pacing up and down on the piazza.

Percy heard him, too, and left the room. I saw him join Harold in his walk, and they they took a seat on the piazza.

I saw through the window that the talk was earnest and solemn, and I hoped that the silence was broken at last.

Returning to the parlor, Percy opened the organ and sang:

“Come, ye sinners, poor and needy,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore;
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, love, and power;
He is able,
He is willing, doubt no more.

Now ye needy, come and welcome,
God's free bounty glorify;
True belief and true repentance,
Every grace that brings you nigh,
Without money
Come to Jesus Christ and buy.

Let not conscience make you linger,
Nor of fitness fondly dream;
All the fitness he requireth
Is to feel your need of him;
This he gives you,
'Tis the Spirit's glimm'ring beam.

Come, ye weary, heavy-laden,
Bruised and mangled by the fall,
If you tarry till you 're better,
You will never come at all;
Not the righteous,—
Sinners Jesus came to call."

Harold sat with his head bowed during the singing of the hymn, and ere he left the room he said, in a low voice :

"Pray for me, dearest mamma, for my heart is heavy."

I could not stay away from Harold, and in a few minutes followed him to his room. When I knocked at his door he called out :

"Who is there?"

And I answered, "It is mamma, Harold."

"Come in, dear," he replied.

When I opened the door Harold was sitting at the table reading his Bible.

"You are troubled, my son," I said.

"Yes, mamma," was his answer, "but please do not talk to me just now; this is my counselor," touching his Bible.

I pressed a mother's kiss upon his forehead, with the words :

"God bless my dear son; may his Holy Spirit be present with his Word. "

And then I left him alone with Jesus, I have no doubt.

Next day he seemed brighter and did not avoid us as before, and enjoyed the sweet hymns Percy sang.

“Now, mamma,” he said, “come to my room; I have so much to say.”

Seated there together, Harold poured out his heart.

“You know, dear mamma, what a proud, self-righteous sinner I have been; but such hopes are gone; and would you know what has touched me so deeply? You remember the night when Percy sang the hymn ‘I am praying for you.’ I thought if these dear friends are all praying for me there must be something wrong, and I prayed for light. The words of the hymn followed me day and night; I could not forget them. I read my Bible with prayer, and there I found that morality is not religion, and that it is by our ruling motives God tries our actions.

“When I saw how the Bible searched the heart I realized that I was a sinner; but my corrupt heart rose up in arms against this humbling conviction. I can not describe all my conflicts, all my doubts, for I have doubted every thing; but last night when Percy sang the sweet hymn about the love of Jesus for guilty sinners, my proud heart was melted, and I bowed down in deep humility at his blessed feet, and now, dear mamma, I can sing, ‘None but Jesus can do helpless sinners good.’ I see now I have slighted his love, but as a lost and helpless sinner, I have fled to the cross.”

I threw my arm around my son, and with a full heart I said:

“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me; bless his holy name.”

Pressing a kiss on his cheek, I added :

“Not only my child, but my brother now, my brother in the Lord.”

Another crown jewel gathered for my Savior's crown! What shall I render unto the Lord for all his mercies?

Harold's conversion is a complete surrender of heart and soul to the dear Master's service. I always said that it would be so, for he is whole-hearted in all that he does.

It is so manifest in his daily life, so emptied of self-reliance, so humble, so trusting, so loving.

Last evening I saw him on the piazza with his arm around Percy's waist, and I know that he was telling the same story to his friend.

When they returned to the parlor Percy opened the organ, and we sang together the sweet hymn of Christian love, Fred and Sarah joining with us:

“Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

Before our Father's throne
We pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
Our comforts and our cares.

We share our mutual woes,
Our mutual burdens bear;
And often for each other flows
The sympathizing tear.

When we asunder part
It gives us inward pain,
But we shall still be joined in heart,
And hope to meet again."

Truly Percy's hymns are sweet Gospel messages of love to the family at Shadyside; for they first awakened Harold's heart to a sense of need, and now they sing of Harold's hopes.

Was not dear Edward a happy father when we could say that there is one of our crown jewels safe in heaven, and three on the way? I have no doubt that all will be gathered home at last, for Madge exhibits signs of the Spirit's teaching, and although Allan is not so hopeful, I believe in the power of prayer.

Harold wants to be at work for the dear Savior, and he says:

"Just think that I have never done any thing for Jesus, who has done so much for me; give me any thing, however humble, Percy."

And with the humility of a child we see Harold teaching a class of little boys. Always able to teach the letter of the Gospel, he is now prepared to impart its spirit.

When I passed his class in the Sunday-school he said, smiling:

"I do n't know much yet, dear mamma, but I'll do my best, looking unto Jesus."

Last sunday we all surrounded the table of the Lord, a blessed, happy family of loving disciples.

May we all meet at the marriage-supper of the Lamb in heaven! O how earnestly I prayed that God would bless my crown jewels and lead them safely home. It was with glowing hearts that we sang:

“Alas! and did my Savior bleed?
And did my Sovereign die?
Would he devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?

Was it for crimes that I have done,
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity! grace unknown!
And love beyond degree!

Well might the sun in darkness hide,
And shut his glories in,
When Christ, the mighty Maker, died,
For man, the creature's sin.

Thus might I hide my blushing face,
While his dear cross appears;
Dissolve my heart in thankfulness,
And melt mine eyes to tears.

But drops of grief can ne'er repay
The debt of love I owe;
Here, Lord, I give myself away,
'Tis all that I can do.”

Madge came to me in the evening, saying:

“I wish that I could have been with you, dear mamma; I think that I love my Savior, and do want to be his child.”

No doubt she will follow in the train that is marching on.

Sarah is so happy to see Harold carrying his banner after the Lord, so boldly, and yet so humbly.

Dear Aunt Hannah West is here; such a sweet old saint. It is true that she does not bear our earthly name, but she is signed with the blood and sealed by the Spirit, and I love the image of the Master in dear Aunt Hannah.

She is a lovely old lady, with her neat Quaker dress, her serene and placid face, always beaming with Christ-like love.

She is very fond of dear Edward, and we are so glad to have her among us, always looking about to see if she can make every one happy.

I am sure that the Spirit of Christ dwells in her, for every word and look speaks of communion with the holy Savior.

This union with all Christ's true members is so mysterious, for that sympathy of spiritual feeling which we are sure exists in perfection between the spirits made perfect in heaven, must exist also, though imperfectly, between us on earth.

There are some Christians who always seem to chill us when we attempt to converse about spiritual things.

It is not so with old Daniel and Mrs. Weston, both so poor and unlettered, and yet with such heavenly tempers, that one seems drawn to them so lovingly, although Daniel is a good Methodist and Mrs. Weston a Baptist. But what of that? They are both members of Christ's body, and that is the true Church after all.

We all feel the sweetness of Aunt Hannah's pres-

ence, from parlor to kitchen, sharing in her tender offices of love. It may indeed be said of her that she "loves God and little children." Lilly knows that, and we find her running after Aunt Hannah when her doll is sick or when she has had a fall, for the old saint's tender hand is so soft, and her kiss so healing. Sometimes she steps into the kitchen, and if Jane complains of headache Aunt Hannah quietly tells her to go up stairs and lie down, and she will attend to the pastry.

She knows, too, that a family brings a lot of work, and so she darns all the stockings so beautifully.

She is much interested in our Morning Glory, but yesterday I saw her looking earnestly at Percy, and after he had gone she said, seriously:

"That is a delicate young man, Julia; I don't altogether like that cough."

It shocked me somewhat, for I have become quite accustomed to it, and it gets no worse.

She likes to talk with Miss Spencer, for she says that she is so sensible, and last evening she remarked:

"Thy work must have been very pleasant with the three eldest, Friend Spencer, but I guess that thee has had thy own trials with Madge and Allan, for, if I'm not mistaken, Madge has been a wild kitten, and Allan a lazy fellow."

Miss Spencer smiled as she replied:

"You have guessed quite right, Aunt Hannah, but Madge is much improved, and I have hopes of Allan too."

She makes delightful crullers, and the children are sure of something nice when they smell the baking on Saturday morning.

A letter from Professor Lennox, inviting Harold to pay them a visit at the new home, bringing his books with him, telling him that they are all settled, but will not open the college until the first week in September.

Accordingly he took his departure in a few days to spend a week with his dear old friend.

Thus he writes after a day or two :

“DEAR MAMMA,—This is a charming place, fine buildings, professors’ homes separate from the college, in the midst of a grove of grand old trees, the country around most romantic, hill and dale and running streams the general features of the landscape.

“There is a long walk back of the college, bordered by fine trees, called ‘The Students’ Walk,’ and I felt as if I should like to be among the company that would hereafter seek its shade.

“The professor has a fine garden of lovely flowers, and an orchard of rare fruit attached to his grounds. He expects a large number, for applications come daily, and as the cares of housekeeping will be so much heavier than at the institute, he would like to get a good housekeeper to aid Mrs. Lennox as matron of the establishment, one who could be a pleasant companion for his lady.

“I thought of Aunt Hannah; she would be the very person for such a position—so competent, patient, wise, and kind, that Mrs. Lennox might think herself blest if she can obtain such a help.

“What do you think of it?

“We spent last evening in the library, talking over old times at school.

“‘Do you remember the time when you compared me to the young man in the Gospel?’ I asked of the professor.

“‘O, yes,’ he replied, ‘I remember; but how is it now, Harold?’

“‘Your young man has not great possessions, as the one in the Gospel, but he had a stubborn will and a proud heart; but when awakened to his real condition he did not go away sorrowful, but bowed down at the foot of the cross, renounced his empty hopes, and is now rejoicing in hope of an interest in the Savior of sinners, for he knows that he is one.’

“I wish that you could have seen the kindling eye and glowing cheek as he clasped my hand in the warm grasp of brotherhood, with the words:

“‘You have made me very happy, Harold.’

“Then I told my story, and he said:

“‘God often chooses the weak things of the world to confound the mighty, thus humbling the pride of sinful men. This is such a beautiful instance of the power of divine grace that, by the music of five simple words, brought a soul home to Jesus.’

“Then he examined my progress in my studies at home, quite satisfied with what I had done.

“‘I have had my eye upon you, Harold,’ he said, smiling, ‘and hope to see you among us yet as one of my young professors; for it is my intention to have a class of boys from fourteen to sixteen taught by themselves, just the class for you, Harold, pursuing the studies of history, physical geography, Latin grammar, etymology, and moral science.’

“You may be sure, dear mamma, that I was pleased with the prospect; won’t it be delightful to teach under such a president?

“I told Mrs. Lennox about Hannah, and I think that she will go to see the old lady.

“I leave here to-morrow, after such a delightful visit, and look forward to the future hopefully.

“God is very good to me. May I be enabled to use the talents which he has given me for his glory! Thus prays your affectionate son,

“HAROLD.”

Chapter XXVI.

A SHADOW FALLING.

FRED and Wilbur have gone to college—the latter to shorten his course, that he may pursue his theological studies.

We miss them so much from our home circle—both so intelligent, and such very pleasant companions.

Percy is just as busy as ever in doing the Lord's work, and it is cheering to see what a lovely influence he exerts in the Sunday-school.

He is the devoted friend of John Gibson's children, and I hope that they will well reward his loving care.

I often step in before Church time; it is always so interesting to see with what a sweet and holy power Percy walks among the flock.

Last Sunday, I stepped in when he was talking to them about missionary work.

I will try to give a short sketch of his address; but, of course, it loses much of its power when not enforced by his fine voice and beaming face:

“I hope you know, dear children, how greatly you are blest in your pleasant homes—every thing so comfortable, your wants so well provided for; but it is not so every-where; for there are many homes of

poverty in our land. But I wish now to interest you especially in the family of a missionary of our dear Lord, laboring in the distant West, amid many privations and discouragements, having two stations to fill, distant from each other, and often obliged to travel in the midst of deep snow-storms, sometimes in great danger.

“He is poorly supported, has a wife and five children, and we are going to make up a box for them.

“The ladies of the Church have sent several; but I want this one to go from our Sunday-school.

“I know that you can collect money from your friends, and you can bring some gifts of toys and books for the children—not disfigured dolls and broken toys, but some really nice, pretty gifts.

“The boys would like balls, tops, and kites; the girls, just what the little girls here like—something to make the children happy.

“Would n’t you like to see the box opened? would n’t you like to see the bright eyes and smiling faces, and hear the little ones say, ‘Look here, Joe! look there, Sue! did you ever see any thing so pretty?’

“Bring your gifts next Saturday to the vestry-room of the church, and the ladies will buy the goods and make up the clothes. They will want cloth, flannel, muslin, calico, shoes and stockings, and hats. Now, be sure to bring us a good lot of money, and you will find out that ‘it is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

I know that they will bring a fine donation, for I saw them exchanging knowing looks, and counting something upon their little fingers—I guess it was their own gifts.

Mrs. Lennox paid us a visit yesterday, and had a long talk with Aunt Hannah. She seemed greatly pleased; indeed, I may truly say that it was mutual.

“What would thee like me to do?” asked the old lady.

“Help me in the care of the house, direct the servants, look after the boys’ clothes, and take especial care of the sick.”

“I think it will be pleasant work,” she replied; “for I like to be among the boys, and drop good words around them. Thee knows that it is sowing seed, Friend Lennox.”

They soon came to terms, and Aunt Hannah will go next Monday.

Percy does not seem so well, has a little cough still, and rides out daily on horseback. The weather has been delightful for such exercise; but yesterday he was caught in a gust several miles from home, and was drenched to the skin.

He changed his clothes immediately, but had a chill at night, followed by fever, which troubled him for a week.

I am sorry to say that his cough is very troublesome, and, as the weather is growing cooler, the doctor thinks that he must give up all work, and spend

the Winter in Florida, saying that it is better to take such cases in time.

“I see that our Morning Glory’s heart sinks within her, for she sees that he gets weaker.

But it is decided, and he will go next week.

Having given Harold some hints about the duties of a superintendent, he will leave the Sunday-school in his charge.

We are all so busy getting Percy ready that we scarcely have time to talk of parting; but the trunk is packed now, and this is the last evening.

It is a bitter trial to Mary, for her young heart was so filled with pictures of the happy future.

They sat out on the piazza for an hour, and I doubt not that Percy’s trusting faith comforted her.

When they returned to the parlor, he sang the sweet hymn:

“All the way my Savior leads me;
What have I to ask beside?
Can I doubt his tender mercy,
Who through life has been my guide?
Heavenly peace, divinest comfort,
Here by faith in him to dwell;
For I know, whate’er befall me,
Jesus doeth all things well.

All the way my Savior leads me,
Cheers each winding path I tread;
Gives me grace for every trial,
Feeds me with the living bread.
Though my weary steps may falter,
And my soul athirst may be,
Gushing from the Rock before me,
Lo, a spring of joy I see!

All the way my Savior leads me;
O, the fullness of his love!
Perfect rest to me is promised
In my Father's house above.
When my spirit, cloth'd immortal,
Wings its flight to realms of day,
This my song through endless ages—
Jesus led me all the way."

I saw the triumph of faith in Percy's face as he sang the beautiful words.

Would that we could all truly sympathize with him! But poor Mary's faith seems failing, and Percy sang:

"Simply trusting every day,
Trusting through a stormy way;
Even when my faith is small,
Trusting Jesus, that is all.

Trusting as the moments fly,
Trusting as the days go by;
Trusting him, whate'er befall;
Trusting Jesus, that is all.

Singing if my way be clear;
Praying if the path is drear;
If in danger, for him call;
Trusting Jesus, that is all."

He looked at the dear girl with such tenderness, as he said:

"Can't you adopt the language of that sweet hymn, Mary?"

"I am trying, Percy; but it is a hard trial to my faith."

“Jesus will support you—only trust him,” he said; and then he prayed with us so sweetly.

Percy is gone, Mrs. Crofton accompanying him to the steamer; and though Mary was greatly depressed for several days, with the sweet hopefulness of youth she is looking forward to his return, quite restored to health and happiness.

I see her still at her dainty work; and yesterday I found her busy over a pretty mat.

“This is for Percy’s study, mamma,” she said, “to be spread before his table. I think I see him writing his sermons there, with this pretty mat under his feet.”

I do n’t disturb her sweet dreams, for they turn her thoughts from painful subjects.

Mrs. Crofton has returned, and made a cheerful report of his sweet frame of mind, so hopeful, and yet so submissive.

A letter from Percy, which I copy:

“DEAREST MARY,—I had a delightful voyage to Florida; feel much better, my cough not so troublesome; and am settled in a pleasant boarding-house, with agreeable companions—all invalids, however.

“I see some work here for the Master; for these pale faces touch my heart, and I want to lead them to the Great Physician.

“There are four dear little children, and they are eager for the pretty books that I brought with me.

“On Sunday I gathered them into a little side parlor, and there we sang and talked about Jesus; and in the evening we held a prayer-meeting in the parlor, for there are two Christian brothers here who join gladly in the services. I do n’t know what particular name they bear—it’s enough for me if they are members of the body of Christ.

“We sang the hymn about the Great Physician:

“The Great Physician now is near,
The sympathizing Jesus;
He speaks, the drooping heart to cheer—
O, hear the voice of Jesus.

Sweetest name in seraph song,
Sweetest name on mortal tongue,
Sweetest carol ever sung—
Jesus, blessed Jesus.

Your many sins are all forgiven;
O, hear the voice of Jesus.
Go on your way in peace to heaven,
And wear a crown with Jesus.

All glory to the dying Lamb!
I now believe in Jesus;
I love the blessed Savior’s name,
I love the name of Jesus.

His name dispels my guilt and fear—
No other name but Jesus;
O, how my soul delights to hear
The precious name of Jesus!’

“I have cast all my cares upon him, willing that he may do with me, and for me, as seemeth good in his sight. It is my earnest desire to live and labor for

him ; but if my Father has other plans for his child, of course, they are better, and I desire to submit, not only patiently, but joyfully.

“ Can ’t you do the same, dear Mary? for ‘ he doeth all things well.’ ”

“ You know, dear, that I have been praying most earnestly to be made holy, and our Father may have some rough polishing.

“ Do n’t forget the Gibsons. Mamma has quite a nice parcel of clothes ready for the children, and has also a little gift of money, which I left for the widow.

“ Tell dear old Daniel — that the Lord reigns. Let us trust him with all our affairs, both for this world and the next. His faith has taught me many useful lessons.

“ Do n’t neglect dear mamma. She loves you very fondly as her future daughter, and your visits are always a comfort.

“ Remember me most kindly to all at Shadyside.

“ And now, may our dear Savior have us all in his holy keeping, prays your own devoted

“ PERCY.”

Chapter XXVII.

POLISHING FOR THE SAVIOR'S CROWN.

A Letter from Percy.

DEAREST MARY,—My eyes are turning homeward, for it is now the last week in April. You can have no idea, unless you were here, how delightful a Winter is in this climate, for we can generally sit with the windows open, and can exercise out of doors daily. The flowers, too, are in full bloom, and the early fruits are on the table at every meal.

“I sincerely hope that there may be some spiritual fruits of my stay here, for I have been much interested in Mrs. Lewis, a sick lady, whom I found without any well grounded hope of heaven; but I trust that she has been led by the Spirit of God to rest all her hopes on Jesus only, and that her feet are on the ‘Rock of Ages.’

“Then my class of little girls has been such a hopeful source of pleasure.

“I trust that I have been able to feed them with the milk of the Word, and that these young hearts have learned to love the dear Savior.

“Hearing that I am to return soon, they don’t

mean to be forgotten, and yesterday they brought me a picture of my four little girls, the eldest saying:

“ ‘You must not forget us, Mr. Crofton.’ ”

“Wasn’t that sweet in the little things?”

“I have had mine taken and gave a copy to each of the children, sending you two, one for yourself, the other for dear mamma.

“They seemed delighted with the gift, for I am sure that they love the giver.

“Now, dear Mary, I am sorry to say that there is not so much improvement in my health as we have hoped for, but I desire to leave all in the hands of our Heavenly Father, who knows just what is best for his children. I had hoped to live and labor for him, but if he wants me in a brighter world, where I may serve him with perfect love, we ought not to say one doubting word. Let us pray for an increase of faith, that we may with perfect confidence trust our all in his loving hands.

“You may look for me in about two weeks, the Lord willing.

“With love to all, I am yours, most lovingly,

“PERCY.”

Percy returned yesterday, but looks so pale and emaciated that I feel his days are drawing to a close. While the natural man is fading the spiritual is growing, for his heavenly-mindedness is so beautiful. His simple trust in Christ, his love for the dear Master, his submission to his blessed will, shine in every word and act.

Mary sees what I do, but we dare not talk about it yet. She visits him daily, and they are reading the Gospels together as in brighter days.

She says that Christ seems so really present in the reading of his Word. I went over in the evening to see him. Talking of the morning reading, he said :

“What a glorious hope we have in the resurrection of our dear Lord. It only needs for us to realize that we are truly hidden in Christ to know that ‘when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.’”

They talk together about the world to come, and having the blessed hope of the Lord’s return, the things of time and sense are fading.

I had such a sweet letter from Wilbur, which I copy :

“DEAREST MAMMA,—I expect to graduate very soon, and the prospect of preaching the everlasting Gospel is heart-cheering indeed; but what am I, such a worm of the dust, to be so honored? When we think of these clay vessels, truly all our sufficiency must be of God. Is it not wonderful that God should choose such instruments to make known the riches of redeeming grace? Pray for me, dear mamma, that I may be a faithful, loving minister of the Lord Jesus, and that he will fit me by heart-experience of the truths of the Gospel, to be able to preach to others.

“I have had a very happy year, for the professor

is such a dear, fatherly friend, Mrs. Lennox is so good and loving, Rose such a sweet child, and dear Aunt Hannah such a blessing among the students.

“I had a short spell of sickness, and she was like a most tender and devoted mother to your son, staying in my room all night and comforting me with the sweetest words of Christian love and sympathy.

“She does not know it, but she walks among us like a good missionary, scattering her words of warning and counsel wherever they are needed, and it is wonderful how much these gay young students bear from the dear old saint.

“She never allows them to speak irreverently of our Father’s name, and the other day I overheard her reproving one for such irreverence.

“‘I am sorry, James, to hear thee speaking so lightly of the name of God. It must be very offensive to such a great and holy being.’

“‘I do not mean to be irreverent, Aunt Hannah,’ he replied, ‘I am so thoughtless.’

“‘But thy Heavenly Father does not look upon such words as only thoughtless, for they are really sinful.’

“‘I will try to do better, Aunt Hannah,’ he answered; ‘but I hear so much of it among the fellows that I forget how sinful it must be.’

“Then, on another occasion, she found an improper book in the room of one, and did not fail to administer a wholesome reproof.

“‘Would thee like thy mother or thy sister to see

thee reading that book, Thomas? Do n't thee know that thee can 't touch pitch without being defiled?"

"But they never get offended with Aunt Hannah; she is so kind to all of them, and so holy herself that her gentle words are very weighty.

"Truly she is a blessing to Mrs. Lennox," who appreciates her kind offices, treating her in all respects as an equal; indeed, I believe that she truly venerates the dear old saint.

"She sits at the same table, attends at family prayers, and is in all respects a beloved and honored member of the little circle of the president's private home.

"There, now, you see that I have given the head of the college by his proper title; for I see on looking back at what I have written I can not forget the dear *professor* of Courtland Institute.

"I am looking forward with great delight to my return to dear Shadyside, though I may have to leave it so soon. I am sorry to hear of Percy's failing condition, for I fear that he will never be any better; but to him, 'to live is Christ and to die is gain;' but for our Morning Glory, my heart bleeds for her. May the dear Lord sustain her in the midst of her trials. With love to the dear circle, I am your affectionate son,

WILBUR."

The two have graduated, and Wilbur is at home, spending much time with dear Percy, for he sees the coming change.

His decline is very gradual, his hopes brightening daily, for all his loving trust is in the precious Savior, who died for sinners.

We had such a sweet talk about the recognition of friends in heaven last evening, for Percy believes it fully, but not until the resurrection, but he says that it will be joy unspeakable to be forever with the Lord.

He prays for sweet submission to his Father's will, for "he doeth all things well."

Wilbur has been with us several weeks, and tomorrow he goes to the seminary to complete his studies. Last evening he spent an hour alone with Percy, and told me how sweet and comforting was his conversation, telling him that he was to be honored as a preacher of the blessed Gospel, praying that he might be a burning and a shining light in this dark world of sin; but "preach Christ first, last, and always," was Percy's loving charge, "for that is the Gospel, Jesus all in all."

The messenger came at last, suddenly, for Percy ruptured a blood-vessel, and in a few hours passed away peacefully to his everlasting rest, perfectly conscious and unable to speak, but the peace of heaven illumined the features of the dying Christian with the bright hopes of heavenly glory.

The parents of Percy Crofton have my deepest sympathy, but they have the sure hope of reunion in a better world, where sin and sorrow are names unknown.

Mary's grief was deep and silent, and my mother-

heart was drawn to my suffering child with most tender affection. Henceforth we will tread the pilgrim's path together, looking unto Jesus and living more entirely for his glory.

Percy left Mary his library, and in a few days it was brought over to Shadyside and placed in a neat book-case in her own room, his picture hanging over it.

Mary kept her room for two weeks in sweet communion with her Savior, gathering together all her memorials of the departed one. In looking over his books she came across his diary, containing such holy breathings after conformity to God's image as filled her heart with most tender and affecting memories of their many conversations on these sacred subjects.

As we looked over its pages she said:

"His desires for holiness are all fulfilled now, mamma, and we ought to be content that he is made perfect in love."

She copied the diary and then sent it to Mrs. Crofton, believing that his mother had the first claim upon such a record.

When at last she returned to the family circle in her mourning dress, with the sweet look of holy resignation upon her face, it was seen by us all that she had been with Jesus, had laid her sorrows upon his bosom, and that underneath his child were the everlasting arms.

She is no more our Morning Glory, but the holy name of Heart's Ease becomes her more.

Polishing by trials for the Savior's crown we see by her touching attempts to appear cheerful and to minister to the happiness of those around her, she will indeed be Heart's Ease wherever she moves.

Miss Spencer has left us, for we think that the cares of training her pupils will be a great help to Mary in drawing her heart away from its grief.

The young folks loved their faithful teacher dearly, and have presented her with a picture of all her pupils, for, knowing that she was to leave, they had obtained such a picture when all were at home.

Chapter XXVIII.

THE DAYS ROLL ON.

HE days roll on, gliding into the silent years—the past has told its story, and left its mark—the future! who can unravel its mystery?

Only this we know, that not a sparrow falls to the ground without permission from the Father; neither does the joy of sunshine nor the cloud of sorrow cross the path of his own children without his knowledge, for they are not only known but sent by the same Heavenly Father.

Thus, followed by a mother's love and a mother's prayers, I continue the story of my crown jewels; for, young as they are, they have tasted some of life's sorrows.

Mary has taken her place in the school-room with her three pupils; for we think Lilly old enough to commence some simple lessons, only staying for an hour with sister.

She has her own little chair by Mary's side, and is a bright, docile child; but as soon as her lessons are done she runs off to the nursery, where she amuses me all day with her sweet prattle.

Returning slowly to her accustomed employments, Mary came to me yesterday with a sensible request.

“I was thinking, mamma, that it would be well for me to resume my music lessons—Percy was so anxious for me to excel on the organ, and I was beginning to improve. It would be such a pity for me to lose all that I have learned.”

I was pleased to hear her request, and told her to resume her lessons, by all means. So, to-day she opened the organ. I saw that it revived many sad memories; but she played one of Percy's sweet hymns, and seemed comforted.

Madge was a frolicsome, mischievous child, always getting into trouble; but in her softened character she is a very lovely girl, and we have every reason to hope that she is turning heavenward. And it will be Mary's sweet task to lead her to the Savior's feet.

Allan is not gifted as the other boys are, but he is trying to improve the talents bestowed, and we see daily progress. He often says:

“You must not expect me to be like Harold or Wilbur; but if I am an upright merchant I may be an honor to my friends. I am trying to do my best.”

That is true; for Mary says that Allan is overcoming his natural indolence, and never allows a difficult task to conquer him.

She often expresses great pleasure in training her pupils, saying that no work could be better for her, calling her out of herself and her griefs; for she is full of plans for their improvement.

Madge is a promising music scholar; and after supper, when we are all together, we assemble in the

parlor, where we sing our children's sweet hymns, often choosing Percy's favorite:

"We shall meet beyond the river,
By and by, by and by;
And the darkness shall be over,
By and by, by and by;
With the toilsome journey done,
And the glorious battle won,
We shall shine forth as the sun,
By and by, by and by.

We shall strike the harps of glory,
By and by, by and by;
We shall sing redemption's story,
By and by; by and by,
And the strains for evermore
Shall resound in sweetness o'er
Yonder everlasting shore,
By and by, by and by.

We shall see and be like Jesus,
By and by, by and by;
Who a crown of life will give us,
By and by, by and by;
And the angels who fulfill
All the mandates of his will
Shall attend, and love us still,
By and by, by and by.

There our tears shall all cease flowing,
By and by, by and by;
And with sweetest rapture knowing,
By and by, by and by;
All the blest ones who have gone
To the land of life and song,
We with shoutings shall rejoin,
By and by, by and by."

Doctor Crofton clings so closely to our Mary, and comes over every morning to pay her a visit. He seems to regard her with the love of a parent, calling her, so tenderly, "My child;" and she is so loving to the dear pastor, not only for his own, but for Percy's sake.

"You may well call her Heart's Ease," he said, "for she is all that to us. How plainly we see the Master's hand polishing our crown jewel!"

And that is true, the marks of an indwelling Christ, so beautiful.

The other day we walked together among Percy's flowers, for he had many lovely plants.

"This was his favorite," she said, pointing to a fine tea-rose; "he was so proud of this lovely rose."

Then she cut a bouquet, and, when we returned home, she placed them in a vase in the library.

We are studying the Gospels together; and Mary often points out to me Percy's marks of favorite texts, always leading to the precious Savior in his many loving and holy traits.

As we study them together, may we grow up into his likeness! for it is studying him, and not our sinful selves, that promotes our holiness.

"Looking unto Jesus"—may that be our motto.

Fred is called to fill a chair at college, the studies being rhetoric, Latin and English composition, elocution, and moral science.

Harold, also, has been appointed to take charge of

a class of younger boys, teaching them in a room by themselves, their studies being history, physical geography, Latin grammar, etymology, arithmetic, and moral science.

I have just had such a sweet letter from Harold— here it is:

“DEAR MAMMA,—Here I am, just where I have always wished to be, a professor in the college with President Lennox.

“That sounds quite large, mamma, does it not? I have a class of fifteen boys—I would like to say bright boys, but, of course, all are not—only five highly gifted. The rest have to work very hard; but I never scold—I encourage them, and I think that they generally believe that they can accomplish their desires.

“We have a club called ‘Uncle Sam’s Cadets,’ bound together by a set of moral helps. All who belong wear a badge marked U. S. C., and I am sure that it is doing good among them.

“It is a voluntary club; but, although we commenced with a very few, we have some new recruits daily.

“Here are our rules:

““1. Fear God, and keep his commandments, always taking his Word for your guide.

““2. Be respectful to college officers, obedient to rules, and kind to all the students.

““3. Never join in the miserable practice of hazarding, or in any of the secret tricks of college boys.

“ ‘4. Never listen to any story or language, or read any book, that you would not wish your mother to see or hear.

“ ‘5. Never choose for a companion a boy who uses profane language, or treats the Sabbath with contempt.

“ ‘6. Be perfectly truthful at all times.

“ ‘7. Never touch a drop of intoxicating liquor.

“ ‘8. Above all things, early in life choose the service of the dear Savior, who gave his life for you.’

“What I most desire is, to lead these young footsteps in the way to heaven.

“I can assure you, dear mamma, that it is pleasant work; for the boys seem fond of their teacher, and try to do their duty.

“I miss the dear home circle; but the president’s family are very kind, and dear Aunt Hannah a precious old saint.

“I think that she likes to come into my classroom; for she has obtained the consent of Mrs. Lennox to bring some of her nice biscuits in at lunch time, and this gives her an opportunity to scatter her good seed.

“I wish that you could see Fred Bronson in the professor’s chair, which he fills with so much dignity.

“When I hear his eloquent addresses to his class, or his fine reading of distinguished authors, I often think of the boy that carried slops to the pigs; and now he is molding the minds of the sons of some of the highest in the land. So much for modest worth

and talent and noble conduct, and the blessing of Heaven smiling upon a good son.

“He was made so happy, a few days ago, by the news that dear papa had obtained a situation for his father in a bank of which papa is a director.

“This will make his circumstances comfortable; but they will still live on the farm, and mamma will not lose her friend.

“Fred edits a paper called *The College Sentinel*, issued monthly, and printed at a neighboring town.

“It is open to all the students, and is really a valuable and spicy affair—Fred’s articles the very best, full of humor, and rich with instruction.

“I find that we have a poet among us, who writes fine articles.

“So, dear mamma, you see that we ought to be very happy, and I know that I am more than contented.

“But a shadow often dims my joyous hours when I think of our Morning Glory, her young hopes so early crushed; but I doubt not that our Father is polishing one of your jewels for usefulness here and glory hereafter. We can trust him, dear mamma, can’t we?—such a wise, good, and loving Heavenly Father.

“And so our little pet, Lilly, is at school; and dear Madge is such a comfort to Mary. Allan, too, seems to be getting on. I am full of hope for all of them, encircled as they are by an atmosphere of prayer.

“Fred often talks about Madge, and says that she will be a fine woman, a cheering light to some fire-side. I sometimes wonder if he ever thinks of her bright face smiling upon his future home.

“I hope that you see Sarah often. Do n’t you know what a fine character is forming in that strong, warm heart?

“Fred and I occupy a house together, using a sitting-room and two chambers; but I do n’t fancy an old bachelor’s home, and some of these near days I hope to see Sarah at the head of mine.

“I admire her strong good sense, and love her warm, true heart, and can say that she has been of great use to me when led off by hasty impulses.

“With love to all, your affectionate son,

“HAROLD.”

Chapter XXIX.

MARY AND I.

ESTERDAY I went into Mary's room and found her looking over the dainty ornaments made so hopefully for her future home. They were scattered around, and it touched my heart when I remembered with what sanguine hopes she made these pretty things.

"You remember these fancies, dear mamma," she said: "I was a very happy child then, thinking of dreamland. That is all over now. But some one must be made happy by this work, and I intend giving them to Sarah to beautify their home."

"That is a sweet thought, dear," I answered.

"When do you suppose that they will be married?" she asked.

"After the New Year, I believe; the two fathers will furnish the cottage and Fred will remain with them until he has a home of his own."

"It will be a happy union," she said. "Sarah is such a noble, sensible girl, and both are Christians. It was a hard struggle to submit quietly to the blow which shadowed my life, but I trust that I can say now, 'The will of the Lord be done.'"

"Our Father orders all our lot, Mary," I answered,

“and it seems now as if sorrow had made us not only mother and daughter, but dear Christian sisters, seeking for holiness and serving our dear Lord together.”

“There is a great deal to do here, mamma,” she said, “and if I do what I desire I shall be very busy. I want to begin our walks to-day, for Percy told me not to forget the poor and sick that he cared for.”

“That is the work that I like,” I answered; “it is a fine day, and we will go first to Mrs. Sullivan’s.”

When we started I saw that Mary carried Percy’s basket in her hand.

With a sorrowful look she said:

“You know this, dear mamma; see, here are the tracts placed here by his dear hand.”

Going over to the parsonage we gathered some of Percy’s flowers, for he always took some when visiting the sick; and followed by Fritz we walked slowly over the path so often trodden by the dear young pair, for I remembered how I had seen them returning hand in hand, tripping up the avenue so gay and happy.

Mrs. Sullivan was glad to see us, for she had been sick two weeks, with no one to wait upon her but Mike.

“I miss dear Mr. Crofton,” she said; “he was such a bearer of glad tidings.”

Then Mary spoke such heart-cheering words about the love of Jesus, saying:

“I hope that you can trust him, my dear friend, with all for this world and the next.”

“What should I do without Jesus?” she answered.

Then we gave her a few tracts and some comforts for the sick, and Mary placed her flowers in a tumbler by her bedside.

"They are very sweet, Miss Mary," she said, "for they speak to me of God's love to poor sinners."

After a few words of prayer we bade her good-bye, and then called upon Daniel Harper, a dear old saint whose sweet submission to God's will always preached holy lessons to the visitor. It was so touching to hear his thanks for the little gifts bestowed, for he received all as from a Father's hand.

Our next visit was to Mrs. Gibson, with her seven children. She has a hard time to get along, taking in washing and going out to day's work, but her eldest child, Martha, a girl of fourteen, is able to help now, for when mother is out she takes care of the family.

We found that she was in need of warm clothing for the children, and this will be work for Mary and me. We left her some comforts, and turning homeward we talked over our plans for the neighborhood, and I thought how truly our dear child walked among the people of our village as a sweet and comforting Heart's Ease.

Percy's death was a great grief to Doctor Crofton, which seemed to be a blow struck at the citadel of life. But it turned his heart more earnestly heavenward, and we all feel the echoes of that voice in his public ministrations.

He seemed to have an especial claim upon our Mary; and every day she might be seen in Percy's

study with the pastor, where he loved to recall all the incidents of his young life.

“I can say, with David, ‘I shall go to him, but he will not return to me.’”

This was the language of the father’s hope.

Mary’s work in the school-room was very helpful, for, coming into daily contact with bright young life, it warmed her heart, and often cheered her drooping spirit. Little Lilly was the brightest sunbeam of all; for, happily, sorrow does not quench the spirits of joyous childhood.

Percy had been very useful in the Sunday-school, but had always felt the need of an infant-school; and if he had lived, no doubt, would have added this feature to the school.

Mary and I had frequent talks about it, and finally concluded to take some steps in that direction, and, therefore, commenced a thorough canvassing of the neighborhood.

We found quite a good number of little ones whose parents were very glad to send them; but they were not all provided with clothes suitable for Sunday, and Mary and I went to work heartily, Sarah and Madge helping us.

From the three families we gathered some half-worn clothing and new material, and soon rigged out the little ones.

But having no suitable books for such a class, we went into the city to get books and pictures; and, having the use of a small room adjoining the larger

one, we fitted it up, and on Sunday gathered a class of twelve.

Poor little timid things! But with Mary's kind words, pretty stories, and sweet hymns, the tender little hearts soon responded to the sweetness of our Heart's Ease.

"I am so glad," said Mary, "that we have made such a good beginning. It would please Percy so much if he knew it; but, what is better still, I hope that it pleases our dear Lord."

It is so delightful to write, of all these efforts, that Mary and I are joined in such blessed union.

Our Gospel readings, every day are such holy exercises; for, praying together for light, and studying the character of our dear Lord, we hope to be changed into his blessed image.

It is comforting to know that the body of Christ is one; and although some of its members are in heaven with the Lord, and others pilgrims on earth, enduring life's conflicts, yet we all sympathize with each other in the joys and sorrows which attend the Christian. And so, while I write *Mary and I*, in all this discipline, I can also write: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."

We are very busy at Shadyside, for Harold is to be

married next month, and Mary and I are obliged to go for a few days to the college to arrange the house for the young pair.

Mary presented her lovely gifts to Sarah, who received them with a kiss, saying:

“Thank you, dearest; they are very lovely.”

“They will beautify your home, Sarah,” she answered; and I saw, as she turned away, that she wiped away two large tears.

We have just returned from the college, and have put the finishing touches to Harold's home.

I looked with most tender affection upon our dear Mary, working so cheerfully for a beloved brother, forgetting her own sorrow in the consciousness of making others happy.

“You're a darling,” said Harold, as he saw her arranging the pretty mats and tidies, and hanging the mottoes.

“Now remember, Harold,” she said, “that you are not to put your feet upon that mat before your table when you come in from your walks; that is only for house slippers.”

“Now, Fred, are n't you sorry,” he said, laughing, “that you are not getting ready for housekeeping?”

“Never mind,” he answered; “it will come some day. I shall never be a bachelor.”

When we walked through the house, Mary said:

“I am sure that Harold will be delighted, every thing is so lovely.”

I looked in upon Harold's class, so orderly and attentive, and I saw by the animated faces that our bright son was in his right place.

Allan will join the class next year, for he is too old for the school-room.

Yesterday was Harold's wedding-day.

The bride looked lovely; and Harold, just splendid. What a big word! but it must be excused when it is remembered that a mother writes it.

Wilbur came home to the wedding, and we were glad to see the dear boy.

As Mary moved about with such a softened cheerfulness, dropping sweet words everywhere, I thought how truly she was Heart's Ease on this joyous occasion; for it was Mary that was called upon to make all the guests feel perfectly at home.

Doctor Crofton performed the ceremony, and when they were all seated Fred said, so heartily:

"I congratulate you, Brother Harold, for you've won a treasure; but I must say that I envy you the prospect of such a lovely home."

Turning to me, he continued:

"How Madge has grown! a child no longer. She is very lovely."

"Improved in every way," I replied; "for I have no doubt that she is a true child of God, and will be received into the Church on our next communion."

She played some of her sweetest songs, and Fred stood near her, turning the leaves of her music, and

praising her performance; but no one asked Mary to sing—that would have been too great an effort.

I saw that the good pastor was very sad, for his heart was with the departed one; and soon after supper he took leave of the young couple, blessing them in the name of the Lord.

Sarah had some beautiful gifts—a set of silver from Uncle John Kingston, a gold watch from Aunt Trevor, and a number of pretty things from other friends.

Next day, the young pair started for home, Mrs. Bronson much affected on parting with her daughter.

Wilbur looked well, and is very happy at the seminary, but is anxious to be at work.

He says, however, that the students have Sunday-schools and prayer-meetings in the neighborhood, where they take turns in conducting these services.

But he is gone, and we have returned to our usual mode of life—Mary aiding in the cares of the family, in the mothers' meeting, and wherever she can increase the sum of human happiness.

Every day I see brighter marks of the Spirit's teaching, and know that our Morning Glory is being polished for the Savior's crown.

The years roll on, and the Master's hand is fashioning the jewels for himself.

Wilbur has completed his studies, and will be ordained next Sunday.

Dr. Crofton is very feeble, and Wilbur will be his assistant—all of us so pleased to have him at home.

Wilbur preached his first sermon last Sunday, Edward and I rejoicing in the precious testimony which he bore to the all-sufficiency of Christ—his text: “For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”

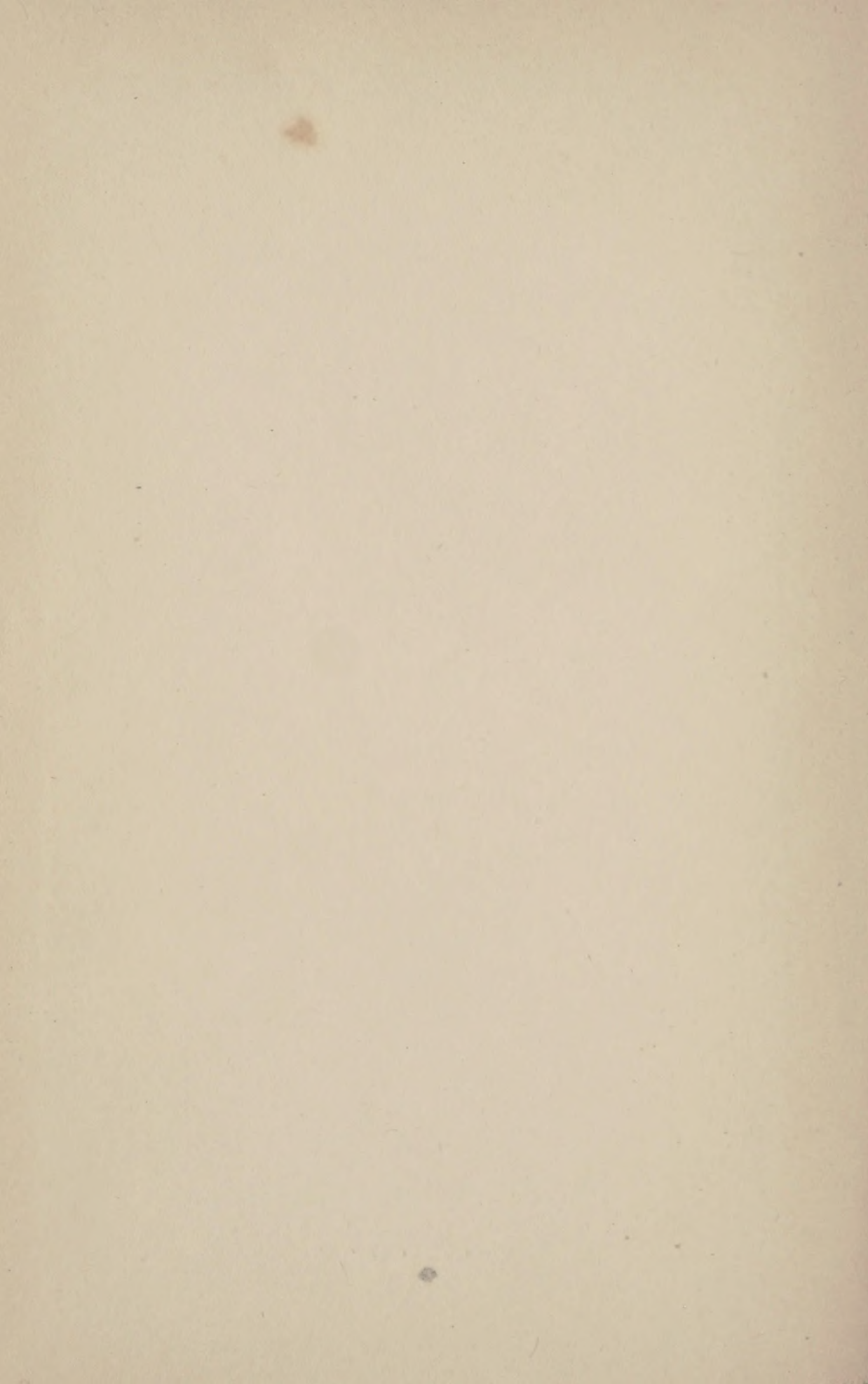
It is so sweet to labor for the dear Lord, in company with our own beloved son.

I look back upon my record of our Father's dealings with the dwellers at Shadyside, so many proofs of his love towards his sinful, dependent children. I see how he has led us thus far, and for the rest of mortal life I expect to write in the history of our pilgrim path, and our work for the Lord, that Mary and I, sustained by his grace, walk hand in hand, panting after holiness until we reach the everlasting kingdom.

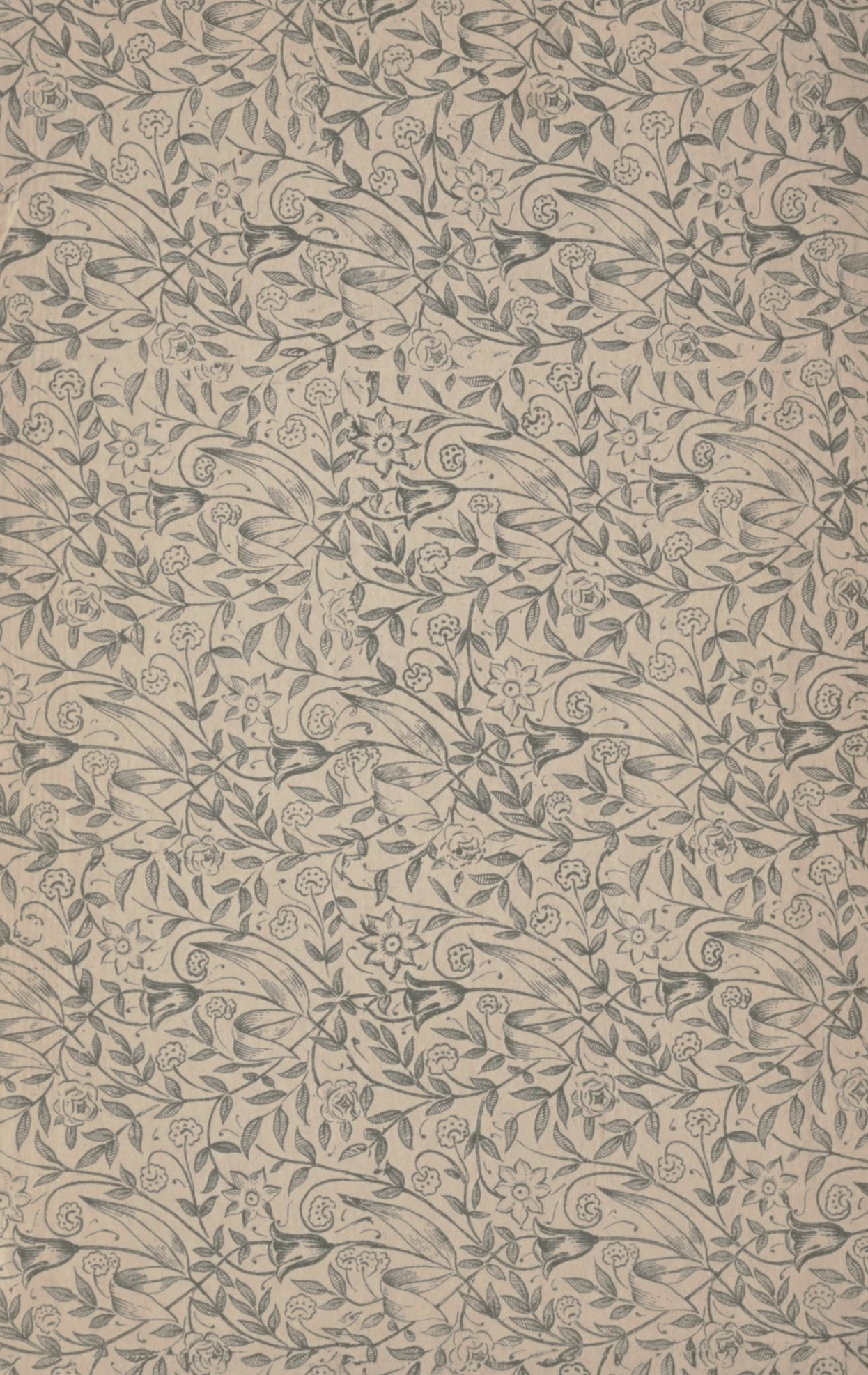
I leave my crown jewels in the Lord's dear, faithful hands, trusting that through the riches of almighty grace he will polish them in his own way for the crown of glory.

“Grace all the work shall crown
Through everlasting days;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves our praise.”









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